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THE REBEL QUEEN

BY

WALTER BESANT

AUTHOR OF

'ARMOREL OF LYONESSE' 'THE IVORY GATE' 'LONDON' ETC.

'The sun shines fair on Carlisle wa',
And Love was aye the Lord o' a'.'

'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man'
DEUT. xxii. 5

IN THREE VOLUMES—VOL. III.

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THE REBEL QUEEN

CHAPTER XXIV

FORTUNE'S WHEEL

WHILE Francesca was thus receiving re-admission to her own People, her mother at the same moment was experiencing a transformation no less startling. Anybody at any time might have told the girl that she was of Jewish descent: her mother might have confessed the, perhaps laudable, deception she had practised. This was a thing that might happen at any moment. But such an accident as now happened to this unfortunate lady was very much less likely. Such a thing can only happen in the case of one who has a blind confidence in her own security. 'No one can

get at my treasure,' said Dives in a former age; 'it lies in that wooden chest. Look at the thickness of the sides—look at the solidity of it; look at the strong clamps of iron that secure it, and the padlocks three which keep it shut.' Then came along the crafty robber unexpected, with a little file—nothing but that—and, alas! good Dives, where, on the morrow, was thy treasure? The modern Dives says, in these days: 'My fortune is quite safe because it is all invested in shares of the Royal Bank of Bangkok.' Alas! The Royal Bank of Bangkok explodes—where, dear Dives, is now thy fortune?

Madame Elveda was about to begin her morning's work. She opened her letters at ten, and at eleven her private secretary—a young lady who understood both shorthand and the type-writer—would arrive to take her part in the correspondence. The letters of the morning lay as usual in a pile upon the blotting-pad. Beside them were the proofs of her newest article, written for one of the most 'thoughtful' of the *Reviews*: it was that very

remarkable paper which appeared this very year, in the January number, on 'Some Minor Aspects of the Woman Question.' People talked about it for a whole day and a half. They then forgot all about it, and that article is as if it never had been written, which is the way with most magazine articles. Madame Elveda looked over her list of engagements for the day: one at noon; one at half-past twelve; one for luncheon, and a few 'well-chosen words' to be said after that banquet; two more in the afternoon. Madame Elveda was not one of those people who can be crushed with the weight of engagements. She loved the swing and bustle of work. The Cause had a thousand and one branches. If engagements can prove anything, it was advancing by leaps and bounds. Every day more women of light and leading were questioning and arguing and coming in. At least, so it seemed to the Leader, as it always seems to every one actively engaged in furthering any object. To make a racket is the first thing necessary; to keep it up, the second thing, and the third

thing, and everything after. Madame Elveda, by means of her secretaries, her speeches, her articles, and her societies, kept up the racket continuously.

This morning, quite forgetting that pride goes before a fall, the High-Priestess of this great Cause lay back in her chair, reflecting upon her own greatness. She—and she alone—had been able to bring together all the various associations. She alone was able to keep the secretaries from flying at each other's throats. Everything promised well. Her own position was assured: she was a power in society—that is, in certain circles of society. Had she put her thoughts into words she might have said: 'I am the leader of the greatest social revolution ever attempted. I shall become in history the woman who lifted her sex to equality absolute with man. Nothing greater has ever been achieved by any woman since the world began. I am the woman who is fated to overthrow the order that has reigned from time immemorial, in which man has been the master. No woman has ever

yet risen to such greatness. What is a queen, an empress, a poet, a singer, an actress—a heroine—what is Helen of Troy—what is Cleopatra—what is Joan of Arc—beside such a woman?'

Then, such is the irony of fate, she began to think of the solidity and stability of her position. Her wealth was unbounded: her reputation assured. Her physical and mental health stronger than ever; she was still in the full strength of all her powers; at forty-three one does not even begin to think of decline. Her eyes fell with satisfaction upon the solid furniture of her library; upon her books in solid binding; upon her massive table; upon her massive chairs; upon the thick carpet and the heavy curtains; even upon her own dress, and her rings, and her chains of gold; and even upon the ponderous clock upon the mantel-shelf, that ticked heavily and solidly; everything together combined to impress upon her not unwilling mind the stability of her position. 'O King, live for ever!' cried the courtiers. Looking around him, on the solid

pillars of his palace—Shushan possessed very solid structures—with the purple hangings, his own rich garments, the golden crown, the golden plates and cups, the solid mass of guards, the King—was it wonderful?—believed that he really was going to live for ever. 'Thank you,' he said; 'such is my intention.'

Every moralist has observed that those (happily) rare moments, when the soul is at perfect rest and tranquillity, and perfectly well satisfied with itself, and perfectly assured about its own future, portend impending misfortune. Hasten, at such times, my brethren, to avert this disaster. Throw a ring into the sea; give money to street beggars; subscribe to bogus charities; get rid of some of your vaulting vanity, your inordinate self-respect; acknowledge that you are a man, and therefore weak; a mortal, and therefore vulnerable; confess that your reviewer, yesterday a fool and a scoundrel, is to-day a Solomon—a Solomon come to the judgment seat. So far all are agreed. But there is another observation to be made. In these times of perfect hap-

piness there is sometimes heard in the secret recesses of the brain a voice which whispers truths which one would gladly forget. Thus in this lady's brain a voice whispered low, but clear and distinct: 'You are a great Leader of a great Cause. Do not forget that your money was made in bacon and pork and biscuit. Do not forget that you are not, as you pretend to be, a Spanish Moor, but an apostate Jewess—a Jewess—for all the world to see!' And then she heard another voice—it was the voice of her husband—but stern, terrible, and it cried: 'The Law of the Lord! The Law of the Lord! They shall be cast down who try to break the Law of the Lord!'

What followed was, no doubt, coincidence.

Among the letters lying before her was a large, official-looking letter, with a French stamp, and a post-mark of Paris. She picked it out from the rest, and opened it with a paper-knife.

It was headed, 'Préfecture de Police. Directeur de la Sûreté Générale.' It was in

French, as was also the document which it contained. Rendered into English, the following were the contents of these two appalling letters :—

'Madame,—I have the honour to communicate to you a copy of a letter found on the table of the *nommé* Achille Desjardins, *avoué et banquier*, Rue Nouveau des Petits Champs. The writer was found dead in his room, killed by a pistol shot in the head. Receive, Madame, the assurance of my profound consideration.

'Belleau, Commissaire de Police.'

Achille Desjardins a suicide? Achille Desjardins dead? Killed by a pistol-shot? Why, M. Achille Desjardins was her agent —her man of business. He had been her agent for twenty years. He held all her papers; he collected her *Rentes*; he sent her money as she wanted it; he invested the great sums which every year accumulated over and above her spending powers. This man was dead.

A horrible cold shiver passed through and through her. She shivered in head, and heart, and limbs. What could this mean?

It could mean nothing. The man could neither sell anything of hers, nor change any investment of hers, nor do anything at all with her property. Nothing could be done without her signature. And she never disturbed her investments, which were all in solid stocks. There was nothing to fear—nothing. But she opened the enclosure with a beating heart and a pallid cheek. And this, also rendered into English, is what the unfortunate Madame Elveda found herself reading. This was the cynical confession of a Man of Pleasure as well of Affairs:—

'Madame,—It is a duty, a painful duty, that I owe to all my clients, and to you in especial, as by far the most important, and the richest, to inform them, and you especially, that the whole of the funds entrusted to my management by them, and by you in especial, have totally vanished.' Here

Madame Elveda laid down the letter and looked around. The solidity of the furniture, and, above all, the size of the library table, seemed to reassure her, for she smiled incredulously, and resumed the letter—'have totally vanished.' 'Mine,' she thought, 'could not vanish, because my signature was wanting before anything could be touched'—'have totally vanished; have, in fact, been wholly lost, squandered, and gambled away.' 'Not mine,' she said, 'not mine.' 'Your very large fortune, quite the largest in France for a lady, has given me a great many years of pleasure and excitement. With forty or fifty million francs one can go on for a long time, even against persistent bad luck in operations on the Bourse. I may confess, to save further investigation, which would cost a great deal, and would reveal nothing but what any reasonable person would expect, that I was born with princely appetites and tastes, but without the means of gratifying them, until I was so fortunate as to win your confidence. Madame, that confidence has been rewarded

by a respect for you, only to be measured by my colossal desires. You, and you alone, for my other clients are few and poor, have enabled me to gratify every taste that a man, still young, could form—

L'aurore de la vie
Appartient aux Amours.

'I have cultivated the Parisian Art of Royal Luxury with the resources of a Nero. It is impossible for me at this moment, which is so near my last, when Arithmetic would be an incongruous intruder, to calculate how many millions have been consecrated to my Pleasures. I can hardly expect that any lady would be able to understand the rapture of such a life as I have been enabled to spend. For my own part, in looking back, I tremble to think of the narrow and unsatisfied life I should have led had it not been for the unsuspected possession of your millions.' 'My milions!' repeated Madame Elveda, with a white face. 'Possession of *my* millions!' 'And at this, the last moment of my life, I

look back with gratitude and satisfaction to the happy and exceptional chance of being able, for twenty years, to employ your millions to the gratification of my own tastes. How miserable must be the lot of those—there must be thousands of them—who have no such resources, and must needs look on, through the closed windows, at the Banquet of Life! Noble Banquet! Happy Life! For twenty years I have sat, a happy convive, at that feast. I have invited many to sit with me. I have been happy myself, and the cause of happiness in others. At last I rise against my will. I would continue; but I cannot—

> Mais quand on n'est plus propre à rien,
> L'on se retire, et l'on fait bien.
> Bon soir, la compagnie.

'My resources — your millions — have come to an end. I have spent, Madame, all those millions. Nothing remains.' Madame Elveda let fall the letter and looked round. The clear hard outlines of the solid furniture were blurred; the solid books in their

golden rows were leaning against each other; the library table bent and groaned as she leaned her arm upon it; it was as if things were melting away. She shuddered, she took up the letter and went on with the reading, while her heart within her fell as cold as stone.

'In addition to the banquet, which occupied my evenings, I enjoyed, by means of your millions, the excitement all day long of speculation on the Bourse. Next to the banquet of feasting, singing, music and love-making, I have loved gambling and speculating. Here follows the misfortune, the sole misfortune of my life. Although I have found the greatest pleasure in the game, a persistent ill-luck has followed me throughout. So much has this been the case that five or six years ago I clearly perceived what the end would be, unless I abandoned the pursuit. Alas! one can no more give up the Bourse than one can give up the bottle. The confirmed drunkard is no worse than the confirmed speculator, and one is as hopeless as the other. Had it

not been for that impossibility of retiring, I should be still sitting at that banquet, a happy and contented guest; nay, I might have continued to sit there all my life, supposing, which was probably intended, that your life would be longer than my own. I continued, therefore, to play on the Bourse. At last the game has come to an end. I have sold out all the rest of your stock—it was not much—and that is now gone; all is gone. Let me go too, before I find out the misery of being a pauper, a bankrupt, and a detected criminal.

Morbleu! ma pipe s'est éteinte.
Ne pleurez pas,
Ne pleurez pas.'

'He sold out. How could he sell out?' asked the unfortunate victim.

'One consideration consoles me as a loyal Frenchman. This money of yours, made by your grandfather the contractor, out of the British in the Peninsular War, by supplying the bacon which enabled those islanders to drive out our countrymen, has now, by my agency, been scattered in fertilising showers

over the whole of Paris. The gold of the enemy has thus been made useful for the good of my countrymen.

'As for you, dear Madame, I fear that I can offer no consolation likely to be efficacious. You have no money left, unless you have saved something, which is not likely, out of the amounts you have drawn. They were not large amounts, in comparison with the income at your disposal, and I do not think you can have saved anything.' Madame Elveda again put down the letter and took her bank-book out of a drawer. She saw that the amount to her credit was between four and five hundred pounds only—so much, then, against destitution—four hundred and thirty-five pounds four shillings and sixpence. She was now trembling and shaking. The air seemed freezing. She could hardly hold the letter: the words ran into each other.

'You were quite safe, you thought, because nothing could be sold without your signature. Quite so. You forgot, however,

that a signature may be imitated. Yes, Madame, the Art of Imitation—commonly called Forgery—is a very simple thing, and easily acquired by any clever man who gives his attention to learning it. Your own handwriting is so clear and so full of character that it is most easy to imitate. It is also so distinctive that everybody thinks he can recognise it at a glance. The more distinctive the hand, the more easy is it to forge. This is not generally known. As I have no further use for the fact, I give it to you. It is my bequest to you. The only difficult signatures are in that common weak handwriting which possesses no character of distinction. This discovery is my own. I repeat that I offer it to you as some return for having permitted me the undisturbed enjoyment of your millions. The Art of Imitation—or Forgery—is one of the most useful and most beautiful of all the Arts. It is, perhaps, of all the Fine Arts, the finest.

'I do not ask you, Madame, to forgive me. It would be superfluous. First, because,

even among Christians, no one under the rank of Pope of Rome could forgive such an enormous injury as this—and you are not a Christian. Next, because, whether you do or not forgive, I shall never know and never care; for a man with his brains blown out is beyond any desire for forgiveness, remorse, regrets, or anything. In the words of Voltaire—

> Adieu, je vais en ce pays
> D'où ne revint point feu mon père.

'At this last moment, even, I doubt whether I feel any remorse. No—I do not. What are your sufferings at losing your money compared with mine at having to leave that Banquet? They cannot be compared with mine. Alas!—

> Adieu, panier, vendanges sont faites.

Many years ago, when you entrusted the collection of your *Rentes* to a grave young *avoué* of correct *tenue*, you had no idea that he possessed ideas and desires which were capable of swallowing even all your millions.

Had you only known. But I grow prolix. There is no more to say—

> De ta tige détachée,
> Pauvre feuille desséchée,
> Où vas-tu ?

'Accept, Madame, the assurance of my most profound consideration.

'DESJARDINS.'

Madame Elveda read this communication three times. And even at the termination of the third time she did not comprehend the whole meaning of the letter. That the whole of her fortune should be gone—lost—stolen —was incredible. As well might the Czar of Russia awake one morning to hear that the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof had between them overrun all his Empire. One who has been always rich cannot realise quickly either that he may become poor, or that he has become poor. The ruined spendthrift does not at first comprehend that he can no longer drink champagne and eat fat venison. Husks and crusts,

peasen and beans, oatcake and spring water, must henceforth be his portion. But he cannot understand this for some time, and he goes on calling for champagne, until the waiters find out that he has no more money, and no one will bring him any more. Madame Elveda looked again about her room —her solid room, with its ponderous table, its massive chairs—its heavy bookshelves, its serious rows of books. The room breathed solidity, stability, permanence. Was this room, and all that therein stood, to vanish like a dream? She closed her eyes and thought of the solid house, crying aloud all through from attic to basement, that here at least was stability. Fortune might turn her wheel, but this room had no connection with that wheel. Fate might rain disaster upon other Houses—not on this. What estate so absolutely safe as one whose investments are all in Government Stock, and are never changed? One thing is always forgotten when a House so prides itself upon its stability. It is this simple, old-fashioned rule which connects

human nature and property. Where riches are piled up, thieves always try to break in and steal. There are many ways. Formerly they got in at the window and lifted the hearthstone, beneath which lay the treasure. Now, they forge names and imitate handwriting.

Madame Elveda turned again to the official document. The writer, the Commissary of Police, told her plainly that the man, Desjardins, her agent and man of business, was dead; he had committed suicide after writing that letter to her. Then what he said must be true. The robber had sealed his confession with his blood. There could be no doubt at all.

Yet something must be done. She might place the business in the hands of a solicitor, with the certainty that no good would result. If all the money was spent, and the forger dead, what was the good of a solicitor? But she must make certain, somehow, that the man's statement was true.

Madame Elveda was a strong woman, and

a woman who in every earthly chance or stroke of fate involuntarily and immediately looked forward.

'I must give up this house,' she said to herself. 'I shall no longer be the Leader, with my great house and my great fortune. I can no longer be Leader. No longer Leader —no longer the Leader. It is all gone, I cannot continue. I may be consulted sometimes, I may be recognised, but I shall be no longer the Leader. What shall I be? Only a poverty-stricken widow; a person who has written a Book, if that means anything. I suppose they will not be able to take from me my Book. A person of no power and no consideration.'

That Voice—it was her husband's—began again: 'You have always loved Power above all earthly things. Because you tried to trample on the Law, you have been deprived of what you love the most. You must come down; you must follow—you who led.'

'They cannot take the Past from me,' she murmured, answering the Voice.

'The Past—your Past—it has been the breaking of a summer ripple on a granite rock: it has been the beating of the waters. You have accomplished nothing.'

'The world knows what I have done.'

'The world has no memory: the world forgets all except those who are fighting in the arena. You have yet to discover the colossal ingratitude of the world. Why, you will have no money. You have separated from your friends and your People; you have no friends: you have only acquaintances; when you are no longer rich and splendid, but only a shabby passenger on the road, which of your acquaintances will recognise you there?'

Madame Elveda roused herself. This kind of thing was maddening. She got up and rang her bell. She sent for her housekeeper. She said that she had received a letter which might oblige her to break up her establishment and to go abroad for some time: she wanted, therefore, a statement about her liabilities, in order to pay off every-

thing at a moment's notice if necessary. She was pleased to find that practically there were no liabilities.

She dismissed the housekeeper. She then gave orders that no one was to be admitted: that she was not at home. She must at least be alone. Then she set herself, resolutely, to face the situation. One does this best, whether one writes a poem or calculates how long the money will last, with a sheet of paper and a pen.

'I have the long lease—seventy-five years to run—of this house,' she said. 'I might let it furnished, or I might sell the furniture, and let it unfurnished. The furniture, with all the books and pictures and things, cost a good deal. There is my own jewellery, and there are the few hundreds in the bank. There will remain, at any rate, a pittance—a pittance'—she laughed scornfully. 'What can one do with a pittance?'

She was a strong and a masterful woman. For twenty years she had gone her own way in the world, alone and asking for neither help,

nor advice, nor assistance. Yet she would have been alone among women had she not, at that moment, felt that she was friendless. There was but one man of all her friends to whom she could turn at such a moment: whom she could wholly trust as a friend—the man whom she had refused as a son-in-law. And in this disaster he could be of no use to her, of no use at all. Then she remembered the words of her cousin—not the hot-tempered man who told her to her face that, call herself what she might, the boys in the street would shout 'Jewess' after her; but the soft-voiced, smooth-spoken man, the man with courteous manner, who most earnestly implored her to look into her affairs, spoke of rumours and reports, and offered, if she wanted advice, to give her such advice as might be in his power. He had also pointed out that in times of trouble the only persons to help, putting aside paid agents, were the members of the family. Could she, after all that had been done, when she had separated herself from her family and from her faith, could she go to this cousin?

Not to the other cousin, the man who had insulted her; not to him; but to this courteous man—the man of smooth speech, the man who had accepted the position without a protest. The man, apparently, knew something about her affairs. What did he know? Rumours? Reports? How much did he know? He had come to warn her, and she had neglected the warning. He must know something. Perhaps, out of all this amazing mass of forgeries, something might be saved: when a great ship is broken up, even the shattered planks are worth selling. This man must know something.

It was no time for considering pride and the bitterness of surrender. Madame Elveda made up her mind that her cousin was the only man who could advise at this juncture. She would go to him. 'You are my cousin,' she would say. 'You offered to advise me if I ever wanted advice. Advise me now. You warned me to look into my affairs. I have neglected your advice; now read this letter and advise me. If you can help me or advise

me, I shall be grateful.' She remembered that in her safe lay a bundle of documents, some of them never disturbed since her marriage, among which was a schedule of all her investments. She ordered her carriage; she took out this bundle of documents, and she went to her room to put on her bonnet.

Then she remembered her daughter. 'Poor Francesca!' she sighed. 'It matters nothing now, whether she takes up the Cause or not. It would have been better for her had she married Harold.'

She got into her carriage—calm and cold as usual to outward show.

'To Mortimer Street, Regent Street—Mr. Angelo's.'

CHAPTER XXV

THE PLACE OF SLEEP

'I HAVE just received your letter, Francesca—the only letter you have written to me since you came here — the only letter. Faithless!'

'Forgive me, Harold. I have broken my promise, I know. I promised I would go on writing as I used to do. But——'

'But what, Francesca? Have I unwittingly offended?'

'No, no. How could you offend me, Harold? We are only offended with people whom we do not trust. It is—how long?—a fortnight since I last wrote to you. Many things may happen in a fortnight. Oh! how many things have happened to me! I have

so much to tell, and yet I find it so hard to tell anything.'

'Tell me what you like, Francesca. Let us get out of this little box of a room.' They were in the little parlour-music-breakfast-dining-study-studio room, and it was about seven in the evening, but Nelly had no pupils. 'Let us get where we can talk. I observed through the back door a large and pleasantly airy burial ground. Shall we go and sit among the tombs?'

'Come into the garden. Emanuel will be there presently. We walk there every evening. In the mornings, if it is fine, the garden is his workshop. He loves to sit in the sun. But, indeed, it is not much bigger than this room.'

'It is a little brighter, anyhow,' said Harold, in the garden. 'How wonderfully such a little slip of ground as this, with its creepers, and vines, and green leaves, lights up these little ordinary grey brick houses! There may be romance even in such a commonplace street as this. To be sure you

are here, which ought to be romance enough for me.'

'There is romance in this very house. For here lives a girl in love with a young man. It is the play of Juliet and Romeo—the girl put first. Juliet ought not to think of Romeo because he belongs to another faction. Juliet's father is a very strict follower of his own faction. Juliet will be cut off from all her people of that faction if she marries Romeo. Juliet is completely bound and chained by love for Romeo. Unfortunately, all the romance is on her side, because Romeo isn't worth her. Romeo is a vulgar, conceited, and selfish young man. But she loves him and worships him, and she will be his slave. That seems to be all the happiness she desires.'

'Have we factions here—Capulets and Montagus?'

'There are Jews and Christians. What else is wanted to make a faction? If she marries him she must leave her People and her friends. She will be a castaway. Yet

she will marry him—I am sure she will. Harold, I begin to think that love is a terrible passion—it makes people do the most foolish and the most wonderful things.'

'It is, indeed, a terrible passion,' said Harold, gravely. 'Let us pray to be delivered from it.'

'Nelly loves this man'—Francesca apparently did not appreciate the humour of this remark, for she went on, gravely considering Nelly's case—'she loves this little Clerk, and she will give up everything for him, father, cousins, friends — everything. And for her he gives up nothing.'

'Perhaps,' said Harold, 'you exaggerate the superiority of the young lady. My own experience, which is limited, in a matter so delicate, rather teaches me that like mates with like. I should think that she will not be so much pained as you are by the vulgarity, and will accept the selfishness as part of man's nature. Give the average man the chance—that is—power over anybody, and he becomes selfish naturally and immediately. And so

you amuse yourself with watching a love-story?'

'I do a great deal more. Harold, I am *very* glad I came here—you know it was Clara's suggestion. She wanted to take me away from my own room and my own thoughts. I had grown unhappy. I know not why. The old things pleased me no longer. Something jarred. I was out of sympathy with my mother—and everything. Oh! It has been the greatest possible change. No one would believe that such a change could have fallen upon one. I wonder if it will last.'

'What kind of change has it been?' Harold asked seriously.

'I understand so much more, to begin with. You see, Harold, you know us so well that you can understand—we have had no ties to connect us with the world. My mother severed all those ties when she left my father. So that the whole world has been to me like a masquerade played below the hotel windows for my amusement. I never found out how

unreal things were until *you*'—she hesitated for a moment, and then went on frankly, meeting his eyes—'until you put a question to me—which made me—afterwards—ask myself all kinds of questions.'

'I am devoutly grateful, then,' said Harold.

'Another reason was the fact that we are so horribly rich—that separates us from everybody else. Other rich people have estates, lands, relations, dependents, tenants, labourers—all kinds of responsibilities and duties and obligations. They are bound to the land and to the people. We have got just a massive lump of gold, which is alive, and grows like a tree, only without any beauty. It is bulbous in shape, and puts forth every year new bulbs; we cut off two or three and leave the rest, fresh bulbous growths every year—when will it stop?'

It had stopped that very day, only Francesca knew it not. At that very moment Mr. Aldebert Angelo was speeding on his way to Paris, to make such inquiries as might be possible to save something out of the wreck.

'Responsibilities may easily be assumed, Francesca.'

'Yes, if you know things. Not if you are outside the world. Why, Harold, I have been nearly four years in England, and I know nothing. I have been three years at Newnham, yet English life—all of it—from the Queen to the pauper, has been utterly unknown to me, till I came here and saw, with my own eyes, the world that works.'

'Again, I am devoutly grateful. There is nothing I have wished for you so much, Francesca, as that you should escape from your hothouse and understand the world of actuality, not that of theory.'

'And then there is more in this house than a love story. There is a Prophet here as well.'

'You mean Emanuel. Yes, Francesca, if great thoughts make a Prophet, Emanuel is a Prophet. Does he make your heart to glow, and your cheek to burn, and your pulse to beat, Francesca, when he talks to you?'

'Oh! I have never seen a man like him—

I have never dreamed of such a man! I come into the garden in the morning, while he works at his panel, and he talks to me. He reads my thoughts; he knows what I want him to tell me. He speaks of the greatness of Israel—his country and '—she checked herself—' the glories of his people; the freedom of him who works with his hands; the contempt of riches—there is really (though nobody would believe it) one man in the world who wants no money. When he talks I am lifted out of myself. I forget everything. I know not where I am until he stops, and I return to earth again.'

'He is a Prophet, Francesca. He should have been a great chemist but for some domestic sorrow that drove him abroad. His heart is made for love, and he is a lonely man. Therefore he is restless, and cannot stay long in one place. He has come over here in order to communicate some wonderful secret —I know not what. It may be a chemical discovery; it may be a philosophic maxim. Well, it is not his discovery that I want, but

his conversation. I think when he goes away again that I shall go with him for awhile. He shall carve in wood, and I will learn some other useful craft—the mending of shoes—say, so that we shall keep ourselves, if only on a modest crust, and wander from place to place, making observations. You should have heard the observations he made when he travelled with me up the valley of the Euphrates! If I had only written them down, every evening!'

'I wish he would take me, too,' said Francesca. 'I should like nothing better. I am strong; I can walk; or perhaps you would let me have a donkey. And I will learn some useful craft for my own maintenance—say, the stringing of beads. And we will make him talk to us all day long.'

'We will all three go away together. We will have a splendid time; and we will never come back. We will wander among the Arabs. You have been with them; so have I; so has Emanuel. I will become—with you—a son of Ishmael.'

'There are other strange creatures in this strange place, Harold. There is a gentleman —I mean really a gentleman—who has been a sailor before the mast, and is now editor of a Labour paper—Emanuel knows him too. He publishes every week a paper for working men, which, if they would only read it and obey, would turn the working world into a Garden of Eden. He is half-sailor, half-editor. His eyes look far off, like a sailor's; his fingers are inky, like an editor's; he is a gentle creature, like a sailor: and he has a horrible wife. Perhaps all editors do not have horrible wives. This dreadful person gets drunk every day. Sometimes she opens the window and screams; sometimes she rolls about the floor and screams. Her husband only says that he wanted to have the common lot, and that he has got it. His son is Nelly's lover; but between father and son—what a difference!'

'You shall take me to see this converted sailor. Is he a Socialist?'

'No. He only preaches to working men righteousness and truth and unselfishness.

They are not popular doctrines, and, in fact, nobody heeds him. Perhaps,' said Francesca, not often satirical, 'these qualities are too common about here to want any advocacy.'

'Doubtless,' said Harold. 'Everywhere these things are weeds. Hence the universal happiness.'

'I like him, Harold. He is such a gentle, kindly creature, with manners almost as good as Emanuel's.'

'Emanuel is, if he pleases, a Grandee of Spain. He inherits hundreds of years of good manners.'

They were walking up and down the narrow garden. Francesca at this point stopped suddenly. Naturally, therefore, her companion stopped as well.

'Harold, Emanuel not only taught me things that I can never forget, but he has told me something besides, that will—that must—change the whole current of my future life.'

'What is that?'

'Turn round, Harold. Stand opposite to

me, face to face. Will you answer one question truly?'

'Truly, Francesca.' He stood as she desired.

'Harold, you have known me a long time; we have been great friends always. Tell me, to what Race, what People, do I belong?'

He hesitated. 'You have told me yourself, often.'

'Let me hear the truth,' she repeated.

'Then, you are a Jewess.'

'You have known that all along?'

'All along from the very beginning. From the time when you were a girl of fourteen or so.'

'And you have known all along that we have called ourselves Spanish Moors?'

'Certainly.'

'Oh! I am ashamed. Why did my mother invent that story?'

'Do not think hard things about your mother, Francesca. She separated from her husband. She would not obey him. You told me this yourself. Therefore, she separated

from all her people. She went so far as to deny them. She would not even acknowledge that she was a Jewess. She called you—if not herself—a Moor by descent. She said your father was a Spanish Moor; that would account for the Oriental type of your face.'

'I never knew till yesterday.'

'Of course you did not know. You so frankly believed in the story—you were so proud of it—that no one dared to tell you the truth. Besides, it was your mother's wish that you should be kept in ignorance.'

'You knew—everybody knew—the people who come to the house, the girls at Newnham. Oh! what must they think of me? I am ashamed, Harold. I feel as if I never could go back to those people. I am sick with shame. How did you know me?'

'By your face. It is a very beautiful face, Francesca, and it is in no way disfigured, believe me, by the Seal of your People, which glorifies it.'

'Emanuel told me. Yesterday — only yesterday. For the first time in my life I

learned the truth. I am a Jewess. We stood before the glass, Nelly and I, and I saw, all in a moment, like a revelation, what you call the Seal of the People. Oh! There is no doubt. I saw it all over my face. But it shone like a Glory, Harold.'

'Why should it not be a Glory?'

'Emanuel is teaching me to be proud of my race—as proud as he is himself. I have seen their worship—before I learned the truth—their worship of rejoicing and of praise. It moved me to the heart, even then, before I learned the truth. I have seen them in their houses—the old men, and the daughters, and the grand-daughters. Oh! and I have seen them patient in their poverty. Oh! their dreadful, grinding poverty. I am learning—I have everything to learn—but I am changed already, Harold. That is what I had to say to you—I am changed—I am no longer your old friend. She lived in a hothouse, surrounded by conventional things she called Art. She talked unreal stuff about women. They have made me real, because

they have brought me to the world that is so real. Your old friend is dead and gone, Harold. As for her successor——'

'And the World of Woman, Francesca? Have you yet made any voyages of discovery in the World of Woman? Are you still among those who would set her free? Answer, Vashti. Answer, Rebel Queen!'

He laughed, but his eyes were serious, and his words were a command.

'The World of Woman'—she turned her head. 'The World of Woman—I am a Jewess now, Harold.'

'And the World of Woman, Vashti?'

'Call me no more Vashti. She was a Babylonian. I am a Jewess.'

'And the Jewish women, Francesca?' he persisted.

'They obey their husbands, Harold'—she dropped her voice and hung her blushing head. 'They are happy because they obey the men they love!'

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CITY OF THE LIVING

I DO not know what would have happened after this avowal but for an interruption. Harold opened his lips to speak—his hand was ready—his eyes were ready—but he stepped back, for at that moment Emanuel himself appeared at the garden door—the setting sun lighting up his face. He was accompanied by the editor of the *Friend of Labour*, Mr. Hayling. What followed after this effectually, and for some time after, drove all thoughts of wooing out of this young couple's heads.

Emanuel stepped forward and greeted Harold, gravely. 'I am glad you have come,' he said. 'Francesca told me you

were coming. I am glad, Harold, because the time has come when I must tell you what I have to tell—the reason why I came to England.' He paused, and looked around as if wondering when to begin. Then he remembered his companion and introduced him. 'This is my friend Anthony, whom I knew many years ago. Then we looked forward. Now we look back. But we must never cease to look forward—never, Anthony.' He laid his hand on his friend's shoulder. 'What? You then wanted the Common Lot. You have had it. Your prayers are granted.'

'Ay.' The man named Anthony, the man with the far-off eyes, had something of a despondent air—the poor man, indeed, was fresh from a prolonged struggle with his wife; a struggle in which the furniture suffered and the neighbours assisted. She was now enjoying the rest that falls soon or late upon those who are filled with strong drink. 'Ay,' said Anthony. 'The Common Lot! I ought to be satisfied. The Common

Lot! When it is over, what is there to show for it? Yet I wanted it.'

'But for Anthony and this child here, Emanuel continued, 'I should have communicated the thing before. They have given me other things to think about. Not that my Discovery has ever left my thoughts for a moment. But I put it aside. Now, however, the time has come, I must say what I have to say and go wandering again. I am a nomad —a gipsy—I must wander, I am constrained to wander by the restless spirit within. Let me tell you what I have to tell; we will talk awhile about it, and then I will go.'

'We are ready to listen, Emanuel,' said Harold.

'I will tell it in the presence of these two as well as you. My Discovery affects Man and Woman now, and in the ages to come. You, Harold, shall stand for Man, Francesca for Woman.'

Now, while he was speaking, the sun went down beyond the burial ground, and there arose the western glow and spread over a

third of the sky. While he continued to speak that glow began to fade into the soft twilight of summer, and the colour in the sky and the twilight a little suited the grave and solemn and weighty words of his discourse.

'I have this Thing to tell you. It is a Thing which fills my soul. I would lay it as a burden upon the shoulders of you Three. Two, at least, are young, and one is wise. I have told you that it is a great Thing, a wonderful Thing, that I have discovered. It is a Thing which most certainly will change the world, and that for benefits and blessings which my brain is too feeble to grasp or to imagine. I have glimpses, I have snatches, but in part only. You who are young shall take it into your keeping, to divulge it as you please, and to understand what the Thing will do. Having given it into your keeping, I will go.'

He spoke slowly and solemnly. The exordium made his companions feel as if they were standing before the porch of a great Temple. Francesca, for her part, was ready

to see the doors opened, and to obey an invitation to step within. The place—the slip of a garden, sixteen feet wide by thirty long, although it was bright with green—the greenery that flourishes in a London garden—was hardly like the Porch of a Temple. It was also incongruous that Nelly's pupil had arrived, and that from her room proceeded the tum-tum of a banjo. The notes were musical and dulcet, but they should have been the rolling of the organ. And when four persons meet for solemn consultation it is disturbing to have two boys in the next house quarrelling. One of them, from the secure retreat of an upper chamber, was hurling names at his antagonist below. 'T-T-T-T-om,' he stammered, 'you're a c-c-c-c-arroty Thief!'

'Shall we talk here?' Emanuel went on. 'It is but a little garden, but it is better than a little room. Besides, it opens upon this broad place—a burial-place, a place of tombs—what our people, who still preserve a remnant of their old poetic feeling, call the "City of the Living"; yet they know not

what they mean. City of the Living, truly. And around us, with its trees and houses, spreads the City of the Dead. Yet you know not what that means.'

'Let us talk here, Emanuel,' said Francesca. There was a bench placed against the wall, with a little wooden table at the side convenient for a gentleman's pipe or glass. The girl sat upon this, while the other three stood. Emanuel leaned his elbow on the wall, which was only breast high, and looked over the broad expanse of headstones.

'The City of the Living,' he repeated. 'And they do not know what they mean.'

'Let us talk here, Emanuel,' repeated Francesca.

'We spoke, Harold, the other day of a certain conversation we had together—in the Desert. It pleased me to think that you should still remember the words of such a man as myself. Do you also remember a certain evening when we stood on the seashore beside the ruins of Tyre?'

'I remember. You were talking of the

future of the world. One thinks best of the future, somehow, in presence of the past.'

'Again, let us believe that we are in presence of the past. Whether the dead are those of three thousand years ago, as at Tyre; or those of yesterday, as here, it is the same. They are dead; all that is dead belongs to the past.'

Harold perceived that his friend's face wore a certain look which he remembered of old—a look with exultation in it—and purpose and thought.

'There are times,' Emanuel went on,' when one must speak. He who works alone and thinks alone presently lights upon things—thoughts — discoveries — which he cannot choose but communicate to someone. When you and I, my friend, first began to talk I had many things to say—they were the result of long and solitary meditations—but to the Bedouin around me I could say nothing, because they could comprehend nothing. When I had told you what I had to say the brain was cleared. It is strange—a man

discovers something—a law—a principle—the control of a Force; until he has told this Discovery he can attempt no other work; when he has given it away he keeps it still: but his brain is cleared, he can go on. What I have to tell you, my friends, concerns a Discovery which will be reckoned, from the moment when it is divulged, one of the great things in the world's history. I have given it to you already, Harold. You have it set down in writing. It is in that sealed packet in your keeping.'

Now, since Emanuel opened up the matter, Harold had naturally been thinking over the thing with a languid curiosity. Knowing the nature of the man and his philosophy, ever dreamy, he supposed that his wonderful Discovery amounted to some social nostrum —some humanitarian maxim. He came, therefore, prepared to receive the nostrum, and to observe the confidence of an enthusiast.

'Let us all hear, Emanuel, what it is.'

'Presently—presently.' He looked out again upon the tombstones, and began in a

gentle voice, and in short sentences, as if remembering things bit by bit. 'We were standing, Harold, beside the sea-shore; before us were the glittering waves, above us the moon, behind us the fragments of the ancient civilisation, once that of my forefathers, for it was part and parcel of the Hebrew civilisation. We talked—we talked—my heart was opened. You constrained me to speak; it is your gift to make men speak. The opening of the heart of man is like the opening of the Holy of Holies.'

'I remember that night perfectly.'

'I told you many things—you were young—it is a great happiness to pour ideas into a young man's brain.'

'Has your Discovery anything to do with what you then discovered?'

'Nothing. Everything. You shall see—I should not wonder—wait a little.'

Again he paused. Then a very strange thing happened to two at least of his listeners. Once before the same thing had happened to one of them. It was on that

evening when Harold stood with Emanuel, with the ruins on one side, and the sea on the other. For then the surroundings vanished suddenly. The sea-shore, the ruins, the clashing of the waves—they all vanished, and the speakers were left alone in space.

Here the same thing happened again. The voices of the street became silent: its footsteps were hushed. The impertinent banjo stopped; the two quarrelling boys were heard no more: the houses, the little garden, the enclosing walls, all vanished. Francesca, comparing notes later on with Harold, declared that the same thing had happened to her. Looking into the face of the speaker, she saw nothing but what he told her to see: she heard nothing but his voice, and what he wished her to hear.

'Let us stand,' said Emanuel, 'in the Burial Place of all the Dead since the world began.'

Francesca looked around. She seemed to see a vast plain, stretching out in all directions to the horizon. There were no

trees, no hills, no signs of man; the plain was covered with innumerable little grave-mounds, as an old man's face is marked with innumerable lines and crows' feet. There were no birds; grey clouds covered the sky; it was evening; the breeze was chill. That she should be standing in such a place did not seem strange. She was there to learn something; she seemed to herself to look around. And she listened.

'All the Dead,' Emanuel repeated, solemnly—'all the Dead since the world began are here. It is hundreds of thousands of years since Man appeared. Here are millions and millions of those who have lived and died. Here is their dust; their works are our inheritance. This you know. We are the heirs, you say, of all the ages. But listen. The bones and dust which lie around us are more than the remains of dead men past and gone. They are all that is left of the shells which once were ourselves. These are not the Dead; they are the shells which once belonged to those who are living now.

We are ourselves the Dead. The Living are those who have been, who are, and are to come. There are no Dead. Generation follows generation: each seems different from its predecessor: the generations have no memory of the past, but they are the same. There are no Dead. Those who die do but change their shells. Perhaps—it may be—there is a conscious space of rest; this I know not. Perhaps we sleep awhile; I know not. We shall learn some day, perhaps. We shall learn it when we have learned what happens in the spirit world. And of that no knowledge—not the least glimpse or sign—has ever been allowed to reach us. Neither to Moses, nor to David, nor to any of the Prophets, was there revealed what happens after that change which we call Death. Yet that the spirit lies not senseless in the grave they knew full well and taught. There is no Death. We seem to die when we have run our course, and done our work for the time, and worn out our shell. But we only go away in order to begin again. There are no

Dead, my friends ; there are no Dead ; remember that. Men know not this thing ; they think that the soul goes away by itself to join other souls in the heaven or the hell of their own creation. They think there are myriads and myriads of souls—new souls created continually since man began. Yet the truth has been revealed. If only men would listen with understanding! Is it not written? "In Death there is no remembrance of Thee : in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" And again, "Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave." Therefore, this is no new thing that I tell you, but a thing revealed unto Moses and the Prophets. We are ourselves the dead. We are ourselves the heirs of our own deeds. We heap together the good and the bad—for ourselves to inherit ; we sow the fatal seeds which shall spring up in new diseases and new agonies ; for ourselves we commit crimes, thinking that they will never be found out ; they bring miseries and shames for the third and fourth generations—upon ourselves. We invent and discover ; we

compel the forces of Nature to work for us; it is for our successors to reap the harvest of our labours; those who succeed are—ourselves. We know not when or where, under what guise, the soul will reappear: perhaps in our grandsons; perhaps in strange forms; perhaps in a distant land; one may inherit the wisdom of the East or the craft of the West; one may be a Malay, a Chinese, a Polynesian, a negro. Whatever we are, ours is the inheritance of the world as we ourselves have made it. We work, we gather, or we spoil for those who follow; and those who follow are—ourselves. We who live are the whole of humanity. The hope of the future—for ourselves; the hope of mankind—that is, for ourselves—lies in the wisdom of the present; the curse of the future—for ourselves—is the folly of the present—for ourselves. These things being so,' the Preacher went on, with a change of voice, 'what man is so great as he who advances the whole world? Some there are who proclaim great teachings, which are discourses, or revelations. They

are the Prophets. We have Moses and Isaiah. Other nations have had Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed. They are few in number, and I suppose that there will be no more Prophets. Why should there be more Prophets? All that is wanted for the elevation of man has been uttered. It remains only for him to understand. Some there are who invent or discover things of science. Of these there are many: they destroy space, they arrest pain, they cure disease, they spread knowledge more and more. Knowledge is not wisdom; yet without knowledge wisdom cannot grow. There are some who become poets: they make the words of the Prophets intelligible to the people; and there are some who advance mankind by the simple spectacle of an unselfish life. But then, again, man is individual; he is selfish; he will work for himself and for his children, but he can see no further; his imagination does not go beyond what he can see. Bid the ordinary man work for humanity; he laughs. Humanity is a phantom, a simulacrum. What

does he care for humanity? Make him, however, if you can, understand that he is working for himself; show him his successor —himself—weighed down by the evils of his own creation. Then, if he can comprehend this thing, a new conception of creation will arise within him. Out of his own selfishness he will become unselfish; because he would save himself in the future he will spare others in the present.' He stopped again. His companions made no reply.

'All this, Harold, and more, I showed you on that night standing upon the Phœnician ruins. While we talked there the past returned. We became, I remember, two Phœnicians; we became our own ancestors; we were two living Phœnician merchants: before us the galleys swept out to sea, the trading ships moved slowly, each under one great sail; behind us was the city itself.'

'I remember—I remember.' Harold's voice to Francesca sounded hollow and far away. 'Then we were by the seaside. Now we are in the burial place of all the Dead.'

'There are moments—flashes—when the past returns. Once, therefore, you were yourself a Phœnician. You saw yourself—two thousand years ago. Thus you may understand how you are bound to the past and how you control the future—you—with your own hand. You have been king, warrior, statesman, poet, peasant, slave, malefactor. All the cruelties and crimes of the world you have yourself committed and suffered. You are yourself the Humanity of the past stained with every crime. You are yourself the Humanity of the future rising slowly—slowly—to the perfect manhood intended by the Creator when He made man in the image of Himself.'

'All this,' said his disciple, 'you have told me already. Yet I like to hear it told again—and in this place—in this Burial Place.' His voice dropped to a murmur, because he was under the charm of this man's voice, wherein lay the magic possessed by him whom we foolishly call the mesmeriser.

'We come: we stay awhile: we do our

work: we go away: we inherit our own works. Some day I will set down in a book —a very little book will do—the history of the progress of the world: how we have now stepped forward and now fallen back; history is a continual advance and a continual falling back; mostly, something is gained; mostly, the slow advance has been in a right direction. A very little book will do for my chronicle. Would you look back? You see yourself a naked savage, alone: then you have left the forest: you have found out how to make fire: you are clothed with a skin: presently you are living in a city, you have acquired arts. But all through the ages you are yourself—always yourself. And you are working for yourself—always yourself. You are one immortal individual life—one indestructible soul—living through all these centuries. When did you begin? When will you end? Had you any beginning? Can you have an end? In half-blind perception of this continued life men sometimes reverence their ancestors. They might as well worship their posterity.

'You of Western Europe,' Emanuel continued, 'live in a world which does not meditate. Therefore, the unseen things—the only real things—are to you impossible and unreal. It is in the East that the real things are understood. Here, in your material world—your wealth and luxury—you live in a Palace built of cards, which will fall to pieces at the first rough wind. I think it will fall to pieces very soon. What we ourselves shall inherit from the modern worship of wealth—what mental distortions—blindnesses—physical weaknesses—I know not—I tremble only to think of what is coming upon the world—upon ourselves. Enough! And now, my friends, remember, we do not die—there is no Death. So you will be best prepared for the consideration with larger minds of my Discovery and its Consequences.'

He stopped. Then the surroundings came back—the little garden, the cemetery, the little house behind, and the tum-tum of the banjo, and the squabble of the boys. Francesca looked about her. Where was the

Great Plain? Where was the Burial Place of all the Dead since ever the world began? Gone! But Emanuel was left, and Mr. Hayling with brightened eyes, and Harold with glowing cheeks, and herself with beating heart and eager eyes, and all her face aflame!

CHAPTER XXVII

NO MORE WAR

'Thus, from generation to generation, do all things interest and concern ourselves,' Emanuel continued. 'Remember that: and now you are prepared for my Discovery.'

'Is it a Physical Discovery?'

'Surely. It is only by Physical Discoveries that the world is prepared to understand the things unseen. Men who are ignorant understand nothing but Terror. Most men of the present day understand little besides Terror. Here and there, among the better sort, there are enlargements. What we have said here would not be understood at all by the people in this street. Let us

take one of our neighbours, some good man who worships with his household in church every Sunday. Let us say to him, "The Lord created the whole world, The Lord put man into it, saying: 'Find out for yourself how good it is. Whatever you find out you shall have for your very own enjoyment in your next life. The world is full of secrets—search for them. And of forces—conquer them. Thousands of years may pass before you find out anything. Wait! You will always be restless, not knowing why. After thousands of years you shall begin to discover, and you shall then begin to enjoy. Always you will be the same man.'" What would our average man understand of such a message? You might as well ask him to understand the Prophet Isaiah—or the Integral Calculus. But we are all blind, more or less. How can we teach the world to clear its eyes and see? Oh!' he threw out his arms. 'We want a keener sight—we must have it—we must get it—somehow, we must. For want of a stronger sight the clouds that we have

partly driven back keep closing round us again—not altogether. No . . . that cannot be.'

'And your Discovery?' said Francesca.

The Discoverer seemed in no hurry to announce his great find. He went on leading slowly up to it by many winds and turns. 'When I fully apprehended the truth—it was my first discovery—about the past and the future of mankind, I could at first think of nothing else. It held me with a firm grip. I went about reeling with the weight and grandeur of it; I could at first, I say, think of nothing else. It made me do foolish things. I wasted time in the futile task of looking for myself in the past. I looked for myself—such was my vanity—among the great men of old—I placed myself beside them—I fancied I found myself here and there. Whenever there was a great thing done I thought I might have done it. Vain and foolish! I should have understood from the first that it was better to do something in the present than to persuade myself that I had done something in the past. Besides,

among all the millions on the earth a thousand years ago, what chance was there of finding any single soul? So I gave up considering the past, and I turned to the present and the future.'

'That was before you met me?' said Harold.

'Seventeen years before. It was soon after my great trouble fell upon me. I first thought of going away in order to forget it; soon after I lost my wife, whom I loved,' he explained, gently. 'Then I realised that wherever I travelled I should be only surveying and exploring my own inheritance—mine. This made the world far more interesting. I had no money, but I wanted none. Our People are everywhere, and I had my art—my trade. All over the world men are ready to buy things carved in wood. It is a most useful trade; by means of it I could keep myself and could get passed on from house to house, from city to city. In this way, walking, riding, being carried, I have wandered about—I hardly know where. Everywhere I have

wandered contemplating man—myself—and thinking what should be done for man—myself—to abate his sufferings—my sufferings—in the future. I saw what I should have to become, and I began to consider carefully what I could do that would be best for them.'

'And your Discovery?' Francesca repeated, expectant. What had he discovered worthy of this long preamble?

'It was not yet made. My mind was vague. All I considered, then, was the vast future stretching out before me, and the slow upward march of man in which I should join. I perceived, further, that the world is not yet ripe for receiving this revelation. The substitution of hope for terror; of general for individual advance; to think of death as only an occasional incident, perhaps causing a little physical pain for the moment; to consider all mankind in every generation as working for themselves in the next generation—this would be too much for the world to receive. Even for myself, it was as much as I could clearly

grasp. Even now, after years of meditation, I am always discovering new aspects of the truth.'

'It would be enough for most men,' said Mr. Hayling.

'Yes, but another thought began to take shape. It became an intense longing with me to do something that the whole world should feel. At first one does not consider the presumption of the thing; it seems even a small thing to ask: the vanity of believing oneself capable of such a thing does not at the outset present itself. When, however, I understood the greatness of the thing, and the presumption of asking it, I became ashamed. And then I prayed daily that at least I might never by word or deed say or do aught that might hinder the march of man. Even the lowest and the meanest can do something, just by leading an honest life, to advance the world. Great is the power of simple honesty, which, besides, is everywhere so rare—so rare.'

He paused again. Once more that strange feeling, as of faintness, stole over his listeners.

For the second time that evening Francesca lost the sense of the place, and seemed to stand where she had been told to stand, upon the Burial Place of all the Dead.

'What, in short, should a man attempt for the good of the world? Ask yourselves this question. What would you give the world if you were permitted to give it something? First of all, you think—everybody begins with this—life is too short, especially for those who inquire. Well, you would lengthen life. Think of the gratitude of man—man of the present—if you were to give him another hundred years—and yet another—and another? Consider, next, how would he spend that additional span? He would live, then, as he lives now: length of life would not change his nature; he would go on getting more money: he would go on sweating his employés and cheating: he would be discontented because he had to work, and could not feast all day long. Would the world be advanced by lengthening man's life? Not a whit: length of days, I say, would not change

man's nature. With such a long period before him he would only desire all the more vehemently the things, the animal things, which he now desires so ardently.'

'Life should not be lengthened,' said Harold, 'for the general herd. Perhaps, however, in the case of the deserving——'

'No—no. There can be no exceptions. Men must be taken altogether. Well—you would say next, that there is too much disease: you would destroy disease. Well. But what does pain do for man? At least it now keeps him always in recognition of his own imperfections; it gives him sympathies; it makes him brave; it stimulates him to the increase of knowledge. Would the destruction of pain, with all these consequences, make man braver and stronger and less selfish? Not so. Men, as men now are, would only become harder. They would fear no consequences; they would care nothing for others. No, no; we must suffer men to be tortured with pain for many thousands of years yet to come. We may avert one disease

after another, but still a new one will spring up.'

'Good,' said Harold, 'we will leave disease to the doctors.'

'Then there are gifts material. The chemist will quite certainly, some day, confer upon man a kind of food costing nothing, and within the reach of all. He might, and he will, increase the fertility of the soil enormously; these things will shorten the hours of labour. Then the electrician might—and he will—enable men to travel round the world in an hour; any of these things may any day be done for the world; but if you think, any of these things would only increase the evils that exist. They will not come until men are ready for them. Then, all—all—everything that can be imagined will come; but gradually—not till the world becomes ready for each successive step will it be granted to the world; not till then will it be permitted. In the fulness of time man shall be allowed to live for two hundred, three hundred, five hundred years. Think you that the age of

the Patriarchs is set down falsely? Oh! we know not—mind of man cannot conceive—what shall be done by science in the future, by man for man, by man for himself, his own successors. But not suddenly; gradually, as man's nature advances, step by step, sometimes after thousands of years, for we advance so slowly—we keep ourselves back so obstinately. In the fulness of time disease and sickness shall be stories of the past. Then at last man will become less, not more, selfish as we relieve him of pain and suffering. Life shall be prolonged—how long? I know not what limit shall ultimately be placed. Of the things good for man there shall be plenty for all. There shall be neither rich nor poor. All our senses shall be sharpened to a degree we cannot even understand; compared with the music of the future, our own will be but as the drone of the savage's pipe. My friends, I faint, I fall sick with yearning—only to think of what the world shall be in the years to come, in the far-off generations yet to come. Oh! You and I will meet somewhere in that

world, and we will recall this evening beside the graveyard where we talked of these things, and our hearts were uplifted with our talk.'

He paused, his eyes rapt. Presently the Prophet went on again.

'What then should a man attempt? Surely his best gift would be something by which it will be made more possible for man to advance. Think of the dead—ourselves—through all the ages. What have they been doing? They tilled the earth; they kept cattle; they made wine; they loved; they lay down with disease; they died. What else? Why, my friends, they fought—they fought—they fought incessantly. Disease killed them by thousands: even by tens of thousands. They paid no heed; it seemed to them as if fevers and agues were necessary things. What they thought about was War. What they talked about was War. They thought of War all their lives; they think of War now. For one man who thinks of Peace there are a dozen who think of War.'

'But War is going out,' said Mr. Hayling.

'There has been no great war for sixteen years. Perhaps there will be no more War.'

'There are this moment, Anthony, fifteen millions of men in civilised countries under drill and in arms! There have been great wars in this century in Russia, China, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Greece, France, Germany, Denmark, Austria, the United States, Mexico, South America, Africa, India—that is to say, over nearly the whole of the globe. And you think there will be no more wars? For every single man who is working in the laboratory, or in the hospital, or in the library, there are now a hundred working in the barracks upon drill of men and weapons of precision. Yet you think there will be no more War.'

'We hope that the very magnitude of the armaments will keep off war.'

'That is the saying of smooth things. Was there no magnitude of armaments in 1870 and 1876? Did that magnitude keep off war? No—my friends—War will begin

again, and that before long. War frightful, terrible, far spreading. But there is at least a chance—nay—a certainty. You may prevent it, Harold, if you choose.'

'I? How can I?'

'I am in my sober senses. You are a chemist. You shall destroy War—you—for the whole future of the world there shall be no more War. I will enable you to destroy War—nothing less—to make War not only mad, which it always has been, but impossible. Do you hear? Impossible!'

'How?'

'By my Discovery. You three people—my friends—do not believe me. Very well, I repeat: it has been granted to me—to me—of all mankind—to discover that which shall for ever abolish the greatest evil of all that afflicts the world. To me, I say. Better and wiser men should have found out this simple thing. They had noble laboratories to work in; I had a spirit lamp and a few bottles in an upper chamber borrowed of a physician in Cairo. Yet it was no chance discovery.

Had it been so, I should have called it a revelation direct from the Lord. For that matter, every good thing that comes direct, or that grows gradually in the brain, is by inspiration. I perceive, when I look back, that the germ of it had lain in my mind unsuspected for many years. I told you how the secret was near being lost while the Russians drove me across their accursed country—enough of that.'

'In Heaven's name, Emanuel, what is your Discovery?' cried Harold.

'In Heaven's name I will tell you,' returned Emanuel solemnly. 'What I have discovered is nothing short—I repeat—nothing short of the abolition of war—the instant abolition of war this moment.'

'Well—well—but how? How? Speak, man!'

'The abolition of war: the destruction of the military spirit: the end of fighting. You laugh—incredulous as Sarai. The end of fighting. Man has fought without ceasing since we first began to watch him: to be a

man is still to be a soldier: henceforth, he will fight no more. I have told you three of my Discovery because I want you to consider what it means. Follow me for a moment. Fifteen millions of soldiers, to begin with, will return to civil life; conscription will be at an end; military service will be no more required; the heavy burden of taxation will cease; the vast sums now collected for war will be used for peace; the sword shall be turned into a pruning-hook; and the thought and work which are expended upon war will now be turned to things of peace. Rid of this incubus at last, the world will be free to march on.'

'Tell me, Emanuel, without more words. Quick! You have beaten about the bush long enough. Tell me now.'

'Yes, I will tell you. As for you two, you are not chemists.' He drew out a pocket-book and found in it a paper inscribed with certain diagrams and letters of chemical formulæ. 'You understand that, of course?'

'Of course,' said Harold.

He added a few more letters. 'And that?'

'Certainly.'

'Then,' he said, 'if I add this, and this, and this, we have a formula which you will begin to understand.'

Harold considered for a few moments. As he looked at the letters his colour changed; his cheek grew pale in the twilight; his hand trembled. 'Good Heavens!' he cried at last. 'I begin to understand.'

'To-morrow I will make a few experiments with you in your laboratory.'

'Good Heavens!' Harold repeated, his eyes fixed on the paper. 'Yes, I see what might be the result; we will try—we will try to-morrow.'

'What is it?' cried Francesca. 'Explain it, Harold.'

'What it means,' Emanuel himself explained, 'is this. In future, any one man armed with the weapon which I propose to present to the whole world, may at a safe distance—himself unseen—destroy a whole

army, a whole camp, a whole city, a whole fleet. One man will be able to do this. What do you say, Harold?'

'It may be so. As yet, I can hardly grasp the meaning of the thing. Yet it would seem so. One man. Then one man may meet an army: one man may fight for a whole nation.'

It was midnight before their conversation stopped. In vain Nelly summoned them to supper; they would not listen: they would not break up their talk. Nelly sat down by herself, and presently went to bed, but still they talked in the garden beside the Burial Place of all the Dead, and projected a world of universal peace.

When, at last, Francesca left them still talking, and stole away to her own room, it was with a beating heart and a burning cheek. For they alone, that little company of four, held in their hands the secret of that Universal peace for which, all the world over,

men do fondly pray. The words she had heard—the things she had learned—burned in her heart like coals of fire; a Voice cried aloud within her brain, so that she alone heard it—saying ancient words—words that were familiar—she had heard them before, somewhere—all the words that ever we have heard may come back to us some time or other. 'Sing, O Heavens!' cried the Voice within her. 'Sing, O Heavens! and be joyful, O earth! Sing unto the Lord a new song. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; the Earth shall cast out the Dead. The whole Earth is at rest and is quiet.'

An hour later, Harold, too, left the garden, and so out of the house.

In the course of time he found himself in the smoking-room of his Club. It was half-past one.

'How did I get here?' he asked. 'This Club room, I now perceive, is only part of the Palace of Make-Believe. I have been out of

it into the land of the Real. I have seen the Past and the Future, and this Discovery—this awful Discovery, this great and terrible Discovery! What shall be done with it? How shall we handle this terrible and awful Thing?'

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE WAY OF WAR

It was long past midnight when Francesca, unable to sleep, for this Voice within her which continued to cry aloud in her brain, and for the disquiet of her thoughts, threw open the window of her room, and sat before it, drawing back the hanging branches of the Virginian creeper. There was no moon, but it was not a dark night: the sky was clear: the summer twilight lay over the graves and white tombs of the broad burial ground; the air was quite still, there were no noises of carts or tramping feet from road or street; all the people in the house—all the people in all the streets all around her—were asleep.

In the room below her, Nelly, kept long awake with the thought of what she meant to do on the morrow, had cried herself to sleep. Even the Great Inventor, who had made her one of the conspiracy against the arbitration of war, slept the sleep of the righteous. Francesca alone was waking. Now, in the dead of night, to be sleepless in a house is to be alone in the world. She sat at the open window, and she gazed into the peaceful night full of bewildering thoughts. Had it been possible she would willingly have inclined her heart to thoughts more fit for youth. Her lover had come back to her—this persistent lover who would not take No for an answer. He had come back, this importunate young man, always with the same question of his, as if he thought about nothing else; he had come back, and even before his question could be put, before he had time to ask that question, she had answered it by a confession. And then, just as Winged Love was visible flying about them, shooting darts and wounding hearts, and laughing aloud for

joy, there appeared this Prophet—the Prophets of the present day are all physicists, chemists, and inquirers into the Laws of Nature—and rudely brushed away poor Love, and talked of mighty issues, the deathlessness of the Soul and the dearth of Humanity, and the abolition of War. How could an insignificant girl, after such an evening, after such a discussion, think about Love and her own happiness? How could she think of herself at all, after discourse for three long hours on themes so great? All the things that she had heard that night lay in her brain, and appeared to her one upon the other. Woman, it is true, does not create, but she shapes and moulds, and sometimes makes things change in a most surprising manner. She perceives what is going to happen, she watches Man the Inventor at his work; and she foretells—except in the case of her own children, when she is mercifully allowed to be blind—she foretells exactly what will come to pass; always and before everything else woman is a witch; she pretends to read the hand; she

pretends to read the stars; she pretends to read the cards. Crafty woman! For she reads the soul. She watches a man, and she perceives which way he walks, and what will be his goal. Under the midnight sky Francesca put forth the powers of her sex. She saw Emanuel the Inventor at his work, and, womanlike, she began slowly at first, and painfully, to read the future—to understand what would follow.

All night she sat at the window, her head wrapped in something white and soft, just as she had sat four years agone at a window in a certain hotel, where she watched the Procession of mankind, and listened to the Voice of the crowd. It was the same crowd that passed before her now, only mixed with another crowd which arose from the tombs and joined their living brethren. The crowd took shape: it became a vast army. All the soldiers who had ever fought and fallen in the battles of the world—millions, countless millions of men marched before her; all the living armies of the world tramped across the

Plain in endless line, carrying spears and swords, bows and arrows, guns and bayonets. And a Voice cried, 'Halt!' Then in a moment all stood still. And the Voice went on, 'Lo! War shall be no more. War is ended. There shall be no more war. For a child shall destroy an army, and a little child shall destroy a mighty City. Ye shall fight no more.' Then the soldiers, sighing and sorrowful, for they loved War and feared not the agony of wounds, nor did they dread the chance of death, began with one consent to turn their swords into reaping hooks, until there were more reaping hooks than fields to reap, and their spears into ploughshares, until there were more ploughshares than acres to plough. They cut the parchment from the drums and gave it to the lawyers—there was enough for many generations of lawyers. The drums themselves they turned into firewood, and no more wood was cut for a hundred years. The armourers broke up the helmets and breastplates and cuisses into scrap-iron, and no more iron ore was put into

the furnace for a thousand years. The guns they melted down to gun-metal, out of which they made door-handles and bells and fire-stoves for all the houses in the world: so wonderful and so plentiful were the muniments of war.

Francesca stood by and looked on. She was the woman who waits at home while her lover and her brother go forth to fight; she was the woman who prays without ceasing for their safety; she was the woman who nurses the wounded; the woman who makes the lint; she was the woman who welcomes the victors when they come home again—ragged and scarred, but triumphant. She looked on and listened, and presently she spoke. 'Oh! I have waited for this day since the world began for man and woman. At last! my bleeding heart will bleed no more. There shall be no more war—my father, my lover, my brother! You will stay with me at home and work in peace.' But alas! these soldiers of all the ages, instead of rejoicing because they would not have to go

out any more to be killed and mutilated, burst into passionate lamentations. 'Give us back,' they cried, 'give us back our swords! Beat the drum again and blow the bugle. Without the joy of battle we shall become cowards; we shall be like the worms of the earth, we shall do nothing; we shall sink and fall Manhood will perish—we shall sink and fall. Give us back, once more, the Way of War!'

Such ingratitude can men display towards Him who bestows the choicest blessings!

In the morning she came down pale, silent, and agitated. Had she not been *distraite* she could not have failed to perceive that Nelly's face was stained with tears and her eyes red; that she hung her head over the tea-cups and said not one word. Emanuel, for his part, looked like a man who has accomplished some great task; his eyes were satisfied: his work for the moment was done: nay, he might have been satisfied with that one piece of work. Surely to abolish war for ever—to make it impossible—is enough for

one short life. He would be justly entitled the rest of his days to repose and to meditate. By meditation the wise man of the East grows in wisdom. He blessed the bread and brake it. He sat down in silence and took his tea: and in silence that breakfast was concluded.

After breakfast Francesca joined Emanuel in the garden, where he was completing a panel. Strange and incongruous! The man who was about to abolish War was finishing a little piece of carving with a file and some sandpaper.

'Master,' Francesca began, timidly, 'I have been awake most of the night—who could sleep after such a discourse as yours? —thinking over all you told us.'

'Yes, child. I saw that you were moved, and I was glad. So was Harold.'

'It was all new to me: the soul that passes on from life to life, reaping for itself that which itself has sown; the man that works always for himself and suffers, or is helped according to his work; it is so great a

thing that [it dazzled and bewildered me—that alone. I have never been taught any religion. I was told that when I grew up I could think and read, and consider and choose for myself. I had never imagined anything so wonderful and so grand as this great and endless continuity of existence. I had always thought myself an ephemeral and insignificant creature, born yesterday, living to-day, and dying to-morrow. You make me part of the world.'

'Yes: we are, one and all, part and parcel of the Eternal world.'

'And then, while I was still overwhelmed with the greatness of a Revelation which fills me with happiness unspeakable, and lifts up my soul so that I feel transformed, you tell me what you have done for us, and for our children—that is, for ourselves. I was so full of wonder that I could not sleep. I could not lie down. I sat at the window, and Visions came to me. Master, you are a magician; you change my thoughts; you change my

heart; you fill me with new things. Yet this Vision terrified me.'

'Go on, child. Tell me all.'

'Oh! It was all so wonderful, so wonderful. No more War; and the world to work at nothing henceforth but the advance of the Reign of Righteousness.'

'The cry of the nations,' said Emanuel, looking up from his work, 'shall be silenced. No more slaughter, no more waste of war.' Emanuel laid down his tools and stood up to talk. 'In every Christian church, in every synagogue, in every mosque, in every heathen temple, day after day, year after year, generation after generation, goes up the same prayer. In the English Church they pray, "Give us peace in our time, O Lord," and they ask to be kept "from battle, murder, and from sudden death." In the Hebrew Prophets the worst evil of any is the invasion of the armed host. They constantly promise peace as the greatest blessing to the faithful. "They shall no more be the prey of the Heathen," said Ezekiel. "Violence shall no more be heard

in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders," says Isaiah. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." These are the words of Micah. Yes. Violence shall be no more heard in our borders. To be the instrument whereby the prophecies of Israel's prophets are fulfilled ; is it not a great thing, child ? '

'It is so great a thing that it takes away my breath. Oh ! To think that here, in this obscure spot of London, there is a man who can make War impossible for all future time. Men will leave off fighting. It is so great a thing, that I hardly dare even to tell you what terrified me in my vision.'

'Nay, child, speak out all that is in your mind. It is by speech that we gather from each other understanding. You have some doubt in your mind.'

'Have I the presumption to doubt ? '

'Confess your doubts, child. I will be your father confessor, and resolve your difficulties and absolve your sins. What is your doubt ? '

'I could not control the vision, Emanuel. It shaped itself.' Then she told him—thus and thus it happened.

'In this Vision,' said Emanuel, 'you have seen things suggested by your ignorance and your want of faith. You cannot understand the change of heart that belongs to the Reign of Peace. To begin with, it will be a world of righteousness. This is implied in all the Prophets. Righteousness and Justice will reign; there will be peaceful industry, with light and easy work for all; with such a spread of knowledge as we cannot imagine; with such a thirst for knowledge as we have never yet seen; with the abolition of disease; with the lengthening of life far beyond the Patriarchal term; with such deep, and prolonged, and sustained research into the hidden things in Nature, and such discoveries as no one yet—no, not even a poet—has been able so much as to see in dim and mysterious Vision. At present, when a man has acquired all the knowledge that he can: when he is at his wisest and best, he has to die. What

becomes of the accumulations of knowledge in his brain? Are they lost to the world? I know not. Yet I know that heat may be dissipated but not destroyed. Why not, then, the knowledge that a man acquires? Child! There are no bounds—none—which we can dare to set to the march of Humanity, when War shall be no more. I cannot trust myself to put into words the Vision of that future. And it will be brought about by my agency—mine—mine—mine! I have no children to rejoice in their father—therefore I give it to Harold, and I go away and am presently lost among the countless dead—lost and forgotten. But the Thing remains.'

He spoke with far more animation than in the evening. Yet his words failed to move the girl. His voice, rich and soft and musical, rose and fell. He stood before her using such gesture as becomes a great and solemn subject. Yet he moved her not. Why should he move her so deeply in the evening, yet in the morning could not move her a whit? She

waited for the responsive lifting of her heart, but none came.

He passed his hand before his eyes as one who is blinded by light. 'It is the vision which was granted to Isaiah, were my eyes able to bear that glory. He saw in that vision that a time would come when a Man should be as a hiding-place from the wind—and when princes shall rule in judgment. It would be after many and evil days—how many days have we waited since that vision was proclaimed? How many evil days have we endured? At last it should come: and the work of righteousness should be peace—peace, child—and the people should dwell in quiet resting-places. The Oriental speaks of rest, because to him labour in the hot sun is wearisome; here the Prophet would speak of work undisturbed, because in this land, where the sun warms but does not burn, labour is a joy, but it must be labour undisturbed by war, or violence, or injustice.'

Still she was not moved. She felt ashamed of her coldness; she thought of the evening

and wondered why. 'You shame me, Master. I cannot rise to your height; I will say nothing more. It would only pain you if I were to speak what is in my mind.'

'Nay, child. Your eyes are still full of trouble. Like the King, you are haunted by your dream. You should be carried away by the picture of this new Heaven and new Earth, but you are not touched. Doubt troubles you.'

'If I may speak, then. But you are so wise, you will understand, you will forgive. The world, you say, to begin with, must be a world of righteousness. But, to begin with, Master, it is very far as yet from being a world of righteousness. Everybody tells me that the world is full of greed, thievery, cunning, and lies. I see the poor people slaving for their livelihood to make others rich. Oh! what things have I learned since I came here! Why, before you taught me, before I saw with eyes, I knew nothing—nothing. And yet they wanted me to speak and write; they wanted ME—actually ME, the most ignorant

person in all the world—to write, and speak, and argue about the problems of human life! I knew nothing. And now, being only on the threshold, I seem to know so much, though what I know is little indeed. I ought not to speak even in a whisper. The world is full of wickedness, is it not?'

'It is. Every man fights for himself. Order and law are maintained, so that every man undisturbed may overreach his neighbours. In savagery every man was an enemy of every other man, without law; in civilisation every man is an enemy of every other man under the protection of the law.'

'Every man fights,' Francesca repeated. 'That is why my soldiers cried and lamented. You have taken away from them the fighting instinct. What they meant, I think, was that man who fights is man who makes, and invents, and leads, and excels. Without the fighting instinct, would he be a man any longer? He would be a woman, and most women'—to these depths had Francesca fallen!—'desire nothing more than to sit

down and make the best of what they have. Man must fight, said my soldiers, or the world will stand still. This is the only reason that I can understand why my soldiers lamented at the laying down of their arms.'

'You are not able at once to grasp the whole meaning of things,' said Emanuel, somewhat coldly.

'No. But this morning I have been thinking again and trying to picture a world of unusual peace. And oh! my Master, to me it is not the world of the Prophets. The arsenals are left to decay: the guns are honeycombed with rust; the soldiers are disbanded. No more war; no more fighting. The very schoolboys not allowed to fight. A world filled with men who can no longer fight or defend themselves. Will they cease to prey upon each other?'

'The Reign of Peace is the Reign of Righteousness.'

'The reign of Peace will begin to-day. Will the reign of Righteousness begin also to-day? The men I see are no longer what

we call men: they have lost their gallant bearing. They can no longer walk upright: there is no resolution in their looks. They have lost the sense of honour, because honour grew up with the necessity of fighting. It is not too soon for your Discovery? Must we not make the world righteous before we give it Peace? What will become of a world full of wickedness from which you have taken war?'

'Nay—but a world of Righteousness,' said Emanuel doggedly. 'Is it not written in the Books of the Prophets?'

'I speak as a woman—and a woman cannot love a man except for some quality not possessed by herself, that she finds or imagines in him. She must at least think him brave—a man who can dare. When courage goes out of man Love will depart from her. Men and women love opposites, not the same thing.'

'Nay,' said the Master: 'but in the Prophets it is written that War shall cease and Knowledge shall reign.' He sat down and

resumed his work without attempting to persuade. He had spoken and had failed to move her. Enough. But when he rose from his work an hour later, his eyes were troubled. The woman's prophetic Vision had left its mark.

CHAPTER XXIX

JULIET AND ROMEO

FRANCESCA could have said more. She was conscious that she had stated her case badly; what she meant was to ask whether, should the world be suddenly presented with the Kingdom of Heaven subject to certain conditions of righteousness, the world would be found at once ready to comply with these conditions, even to obtain so great a gift. Seeing that the offer is daily and hourly renewed to a heedless world, she thought that perhaps, even under these new conditions, it would not be accepted. Nay, the opening of every new way of approach to that blissful reign—such as freedom of speech and action, material ease and comfort, education, inven-

tion, and discovery—has only hitherto been used to block up the other end of that way of approach, and to divert the new road into a broad and handsome thoroughfare for the opposite, or hostile Kingdom. She said no more then, but retreated, hoping for another conversation, and for what the preachers used to call enlargement of speech. Alas! That enlargement! For want of it we express our thoughts so feebly and understand each other so little!

She went back to the parlour. Here Nelly, who had finished washing up the breakfast cups, was collecting her music and tying it up. She had left off crying, but her eyes were too bright. There was a red spot on her cheek; she was too quick in her movements. She looked up and laughed—at nothing—not merrily, when Francesca appeared.

'You have had another sermon, then?' she said, and laughed again nervously.

'Can I help you in anything, Nelly? Are you sorting your music?'

'Yes. I am sorting all the music. Well, Francesca, I have shown you all I could—the synagogue and the people, everything except the slums—and you don't want to see them. You will tell Clara that I did what I could for you——'

'Of course. But why, Nelly? You can tell Clara yourself.'

'I don't know about that.' Nelly shook her head. Then she laughed again—a little hysterical laugh, which ended in something very like a sob.

'Why, Nelly, what is the matter? You have not——'

'Nothing is the matter except a little headache. That is all. Only a little headache. Francesca, I have not been able to show you a Jewish wedding. Now that is something you would really like to see. To begin with, there is a beautiful velvet canopy supported by four men, who are witnesses. There must be at least ten men present as witnesses. The parents of both bring the

bride and bridegroom and place them under the canopy. The Chief Rabbi of the synagogue should be there, if possible, and the Chassan, or Reader. First, they take a glass of wine and pray. Then the bride and bridegroom drink of the wine one after the other. Then the bridegroom puts the ring on the bride's finger and says, "Beloved, thou art wedded to me with this ring, according to the law of Moses and Israel." After that they read the marriage contract, and they drink more wine with benedictions. Then they break the glass, and the company all cry out together, wishing good luck to the newly-married pair. And then they have a feast: as great a feast as they can afford: a feast that lasts for seven days, sometimes. I should like you to be present at my wedding, Francesca; but that can't be, now.'

Francesca looked up sharply. What did Nelly mean?

'The way these Christians get married,' she went on, 'is just dreadful. They needn't

even have a prayer. There needn't be any witnesses. They needn't go to a church, and all they've got to do is to put their names down in a book, that's all,' she shuddered. 'It's a dreadful way to get married. All the same, it is a real marriage. The man can't get out of it afterwards, even if he wants to ever so much.'

'Nelly, what do you mean? What have you done about Mr. Hayling?'

'That's all right. You'll very soon find out that it's all right, Francesca.' Nelly, with an armful of music, stopped in her work and sat down in a chair. 'I should have liked to talk it over with you. But I couldn't; you don't understand. You are not like other girls, you know. One would think you didn't want a lover—well'—for Francesca changed colour—'of course you do, because, after all, with your fine manners and your stand-offishness—which I like in you—there's a woman under it all; but you don't talk about it as we do—me and my friends; we don't talk about anything else, except our things. So

I had to settle it my own way, without taking your advice. I couldn't even advise with Clara, because she was dead against it all the time; so I had to settle it for myself. The long and the short of it all is, that I can't give him up, Francesca. Don't tell me that he is this and that; I know what he is just as well as you do, and I can't give him up—even for the sake of my father and my people and my religion.'

'Oh! But, Nelly, think—consider; you will at any rate do nothing rash?'

'Oh! no'—she laughed again; 'nothing rash; I can promise that.'

She carried her music and her two banjoes out of the room.

Had Francesca been like any of those other girls—Nelly's friends—she would have guessed by this sign what was going to be done. But she was not like other girls. Love and courtship and marriage, least of all, clandestine marriage—of these things she neither spoke nor thought. Nelly, however, had been spending a terrible time of struggle.

She had to choose—many girls have had the same choice—between her lover and her people. Now, she was a Jewess, one to whom the choice means much more than to others. When a man left that ancient Faith, and afterwards changed his mind and returned to it, they made him, in former times, lie across the door, so that the faithful could step upon him, and wipe their shoes upon him. In this way they testified to their horror of apostasy. What happened with a woman? In the good old times, she would be led out of the camp and stoned to death.

And now? She would henceforward be to her people as one who is dead, and she would have to become a Christian. Now it is difficult, as we are constantly being told, for an Irish Catholic to become a Protestant: for a Scotch Presbyterian to become an Episcopalian; for a Pole to exchange the Church of Rome for the Church of the Czar; difficult, everywhere, to leave the patriotic creed for the persecuting creed. But for a Jew to

become a Christian is a thing ten times—a hundred times—more difficult. And Nelly must become a Christian if she ceased to be a Jewess.

Francesca, restless and oppressed with the possession of her great secret, and not able to think, just then, about Nelly's love affairs, put on her hat, and went out to walk up and down the great highway. She stayed out for two hours. When she returned, about noon, she found Alma, the little handmaid, sitting on the stairs, and crying into her apron.

'Why, Alma,' she said, 'what is the matter?'

'She's gone, Miss. She sent her best love to you, and she's gone.'

'Who has gone?'

'Miss Nelly, Miss. She took all her things and her banjoes, and her music, and everything, and she's gone away in a four-wheel cab. She told me to tell you, with her best love, that she was going away to be married, and that she wasn't ever coming back again

Oh! Oh! Oh!' The child broke out into fresh crying.

'Gone away to be married?'

'Yes, Miss; with her best love, and she's never coming back any more.'

'Did she say anything else?'

'She poured out a glass of sherry wine, and she said would I drink some when she got into the cab and wish me joy and good luck and break the wine-glass for luck—and I did! There's the bits; and would I throw a handful of rice after the cab for luck—and I did—for luck—and she said she'd left some letters in the parlour.'

There were, in fact, three letters. One was for herself, Francesca; one was for Clara, and the other was for her father.

The first was as follows:—

'Dear Francesca,—After what you have seen and heard, and after what I told you this morning, which was plain enough for any girl in the world, except you, to understand, you ought not to be surprised to hear that I've gone off with the man I love. I've

tried to get over it, but it's no use. I can never be happy without him. So I am to meet him to-day at noon, and we are to be married at the Registrar's. It has all been arranged. He put up my name in proper order, only when it came to the last I was afraid to go, and it angered him. You saw how it angered him. He swore he would kill himself. Dear Francesca, how could I think of living, if I were to cause his suicide?

'Dear Francesca, you were hard upon him the other day. All men want a girl to keep company with. Since I wouldn't have him, can I blame him for turning to you? Besides, he wasn't quite in his right mind. You'll forgive me for being jealous. And I am sure, now, that you didn't tempt him with looks. You couldn't do such a thing.

'Dear Francesca, you don't understand. You are too grand for us. You despise my boy because he isn't so proud and cold as you like. We don't expect our husbands to be angels. We take them as they are made

for us, and we make the best of each other. If Anthony keeps steady, and won't drink, I have no fear for him. When a man takes to drink it's all over. But he won't, because the sight of his mother makes him sick. I shall keep him off the music-hall boards, because I've heard from the pupils what goes on in some of the places, and he shan't have the temptations of it. As for his talk about Parliament, that's only a dream. Let him dream, if it makes him happy. I mean to keep him at his place—steady—at the works.

'Dear Francesca, it was good of you to feel happy with me. You are a great deal too grand and wise for me to be quite at ease with you. But I've done my best, and now you don't want me any more. My father will be very angry. I do not know what he will say, but it will be too late for him to do anything. Come and see me soon. I am not afraid of you. As for my father, he will say dreadful things, but there's a saying, "A thousand bad words never tore

a shirt." You will find the bunch of house-keys in the right-hand drawer in my bedroom. I'm afraid they are not much use to you, but there's nobody else to take them.

'Your loving

'NELL (by the time you get this,

'Nelly Hayling').

She took the letter and the news to Emanuel.

'In the East,' said Emanuel, 'they lock up the girls in the Harem; they are never allowed to run about without an escort. That one of these girls should fall in love with a stranger is, therefore, impossible and unknown. It is partly by keeping up the Oriental custom of secluding the girls that we have kept the race apart. When such a girl as Nelly is left to receive young men as pupils, the next step is to receive one of them as a lover. Her father ought not to be surprised.'

'What can we do?'

'Nothing. We do not know where her father is. I will go to Mortimer Street, if

you like, and see Mr. Angelo. You can telegraph to her cousin Clara. But the girl is married by this time. Nothing can alter that.'

'I am afraid her father will be very angry. He is a passionate and a wilful man. Nelly was always afraid of him.'

'He may be angry at first. He will probably use the language of great wrath. When he understands that he cannot alter things—he will accept them. Perhaps he will never forgive his daughter. Francesca, you must take pity upon this girl. She has been left too much alone. Before I came here she was sometimes left alone for months. She is taken away from all her friends by a young man who has no friends of his own to give her. The boy's father does not belong to our People, and his mother is a drunkard. Do not desert her. Go and see her in a few days. Be kind to her. Let her feel that she has one friend at least left. In time of trouble—with such a boy as that there is sure to be trouble—a woman, if she have no

friends of her own sex, may fall into madness, and do things which can never afterwards be undone.'

Emanuel went away on his errand. He returned in the afternoon. Mr. Angelo knew nothing about his brother's travels. He showed himself greatly moved by the news, and foretold unforgiving wrath on his brother's part. The girl, he said, had ceased to belong to the family. Henceforth her name should not be mentioned in his house. In the whole long history of his family no such apostasy had ever been known; and so on—what might have been expected.

Clara obeyed the telegram, and hurried to the house; but there was nothing to do but to wait. How long would they have to wait before they would find out the father's address? Neither Emanuel, nor Clara, nor Francesca knew anything about the Turf or they would have understood that so well-known a man as Mr. Sydney Bernard would be certain on such and such a day to be at such and such a place. There could be no

doubt of it. This, however, they did not understand.

'It may be weeks,' said Clara, 'before he comes home again. Oh! we must find him somehow. My father must help to find him. He does not write to Nelly for weeks together sometimes. It's a shame! The poor girl was left alone in the house, with no one but her pupils and this little girl. No wonder she got to thinking foolishness! And such a conceited stick of half a man, too! How a girl can throw herself away upon such an object! No money, and no brains. Poor Nell!'

Presently they took a tearful tea, and fell to talking of things sorrowful—the temptations which surround and beset every pretty girl—that admirable arrangement of the Oriental veil for the baffling of the tempter, and so forth.

When it grew dark, they lit candles and became more gloomy. Then Emanuel joined them, but he was silent, and at sight of him Francesca was reminded of the Great Dis-

covery. Strange! She was one of the Conspiracy about to revolutionise the world—nothing short of that stupendous fact!—and she had forgotten it in the absorbing interest of this case of a vulgar Romeo and a lower middle-class Juliet! The incongruity made her smile. Afterwards she made some admirable reflections on the vast importance of the individual soul. But she did not put these reflections into words.

Emanuel sat with them, his legs crossed upright in his chair. The two girls whispered.

Suddenly they heard outside, distinct above the patter of the strolling feet, the quick, sharp beat of a man's foot. It stopped at the door. The door was opened with a key; the man stepped into the narrow hall.

'Good Heavens!' whispered Clara; 'it is my uncle's step. He's the only man who has a latch-key. Who has told him? Why has he come here? Francesca—Emanuel—help me: stand by me; he will blame me—oh!'

For the door opened, and Mr. Sydney Bernard himself strode in. He greeted no

one; he scowled on the assembled company; his face was dark; it was distorted, apparently with wrath. Heaven help his daughter! Some one must have told him.

'Where is Nelly?' he asked roughly.

CHAPTER XXX

MY DUCATS AND MY DAUGHTER!

They all three stood up, as in the presence of Misfortune.

'Uncle!' cried Clara. 'Who has told you? Have you heard?'

'Don't ask silly questions. I've heard enough to make ten men sick.'

'Have you had a letter, then?'

'Letters? What is the girl talking about? There will be letters enough to-morrow, and next day, and the day after that. Letters? Aye, and telegrams, telephones, messages; people who will sit down on the office door-step. They'd come here if they knew. Oh! There will be plenty. Where the devil is Nell?'

'You say you have heard—and yet—you ask—where she is?'

'Clara,' Francesca whispered, 'he is thinking of something else. Some dreadful misfortune has happened. Look at his face.'

'Sydney Bernard'—Emanuel laid his hand upon his shoulder—'you have come home in great trouble. I know not the extent of your trouble——'

'Extent? Why—all the world will guess it to-night, and will know it to-morrow. It is Ruin—Ruin—Ruin.'

'Ruin? Yet there are Ruins which may be repaired. If it is only money.'

'Only money?—only money? Fool! What is there beside money?'

Emanuel stepped back. 'What is there,' he repeated sadly, 'beside money? Man—there is the whole world beside money. Is money all you desire or all you dread? At this moment—this very moment—you will be rebuked. Can a man be struck in no other way?'

'None that he will feel so much,' said Mr Bernard.

'Tell him, Clara,' said Emanuel.

'Here is a letter for you, uncle.' Clara gave him the letter.

He snatched it from her, glaring round like a hunted man.

'Ruin!' he repeated; 'and this blamed Fool asks if it is only money! I am lost! What do you understand about Ruin, and Loss, and Dishonour—you—Dreamer? You know, Clara, what it means. Go home and tell your father that it is all over. I've been broke a dozen times, but never like this before. I have got over many blows, but this is death. Tell your father that it's thousands upon thousands; far too big a thing for me to go to him about it; and as for money to meet them all—it's this way.' He pulled his pockets inside out; they were empty. 'That's all. Ruin! Ruin! Ruin! Where's Nell? I want her to pack up all I've got. I must cross the water this very evening. Boulogne for me, for the present.'

'Read the letter,' said Emanuel.

He took the letter and looked at it, but without reading a word. His mind was elsewhere; he was full of his own trouble. 'What are you doing—you three—staring at me? It hasn't got into the papers yet, I suppose? Well? What d'ye mean—all of you? I haven't murdered anyone. There've been other defaulters before me; yet that doesn't make it any better for me. You—what's your name—with your talk about money; if you're one of Us you love the gambling of it, and the sport of it; else, how can you be one of Us? Well, there's to be no more sport for me. I can never show my face—never be seen in Fleet Street—never again. And as for a racecourse, why, I've seen 'em warned off; I've seen 'em run for it. I've seen 'em guyed while they ran. And now to remember those unlucky sportsmen, and to think of myself!'

'Read the letter,' Emanuel repeated.

'Where's Nelly? Where's my girl?' he asked, looking round helplessly.

'Read the letter.' Emanuel took it from his hands and held it before his face. 'Read, I say. You will know, then, where Nelly is.'

At last he read it. First, his mind still full of his other trouble, without comprehending one word of it. He read it again. This time with bewilderment. He read it a third time, and handed the letter without a word to Clara.

'It is true, uncle. She left the house at twelve o'clock to-day, telling the girl she was going to be married. She took her box with her, and her instruments, and music, except the piano, and she said she was not coming back any more. She's married to a young man named——'

'Read it for me,' he said. 'I don't seem able to understand to-night, somehow. It's—it's—the other business—I suppose.'

Clara read it.

'Dear Father,—When you get this letter I shall be married. I am going to marry a Christian. I am sure you would never consent, so I have told you nothing about it.

When you are able to understand that all my happiness is concerned with this marriage, I hope you will forgive me. Meantime I am afraid you will be angry. I am to remain in any religion that I like. Since it is my happiness, I hope you will be able to forgive me.—Your affectionate daughter,

'NELLY.'

'Is it true?' he asked helplessly. 'Is it true? Nelly—my Nelly—married to a Christian? What does it mean—at all? Why did she do it? Is it true?'

'It is quite true, uncle. She is married to a man named——'

'Silence! I will hear no more. She is married to a Christian!' He laid his hand upon his forehead. 'I was thinking of the other thing. I am ruined. My money is gone, and my name. I am lost. I came home, thinking to tell my child that her father was a pauper—perhaps she had a pound or two to spare—I thought that she would cry a little, and comfort me a little—

it's something for a man to creep home and hear words that mean nothing—hopes when there is not any hope, praise when the whole sky is ringing with curses! And I come home—and she is dead—dead. My daughter is dead—my child—my Preciada—my Nelly, she is dead!'

The ruined bookmaker looked about him with the dignity of this double misfortune. No one said anything; no one moved; he was bereft of money, name, and child—all gone together.

'She is dead,' he repeated; 'but there is no body: there is no shroud wanted. The watcher of Death is not in the house: there will be no funeral. We shall not sit in a circle and eat the funeral eggs.' He drew a knife from his pocket, opened the blade, and pulling his coat round with his left hand, cut through the right side of his coat a hand's breadth with the knife. 'Lo!' he said. 'My daughter is dead, and for her sake I rend my garments. My daughter—my Preciada—my Nelly—my pretty girl—is dead and buried.

Let the lighted candle and the basin of water be placed in her room for the purification of her soul. She is buried—but not among her people! She is dead—among the Gentiles. We have broken our fast together after the funeral; we have said Kodesh to deliver her soul—but no, her soul is lost. Let us mourn for the dead after the manner of our religion.'

In the old days the mourners sat on the ground without shoes; in that position they received the condolences of their friends. So sat Job after his misfortunes. Mr. Bernard did not take off his boots, nor did he sit upon the floor. For an elderly man to sit on the floor without his boots may be Oriental, but it is no longer dignified. Mr. Bernard sat in a chair in the middle of the room; he sat in silence, with folded hands and bowed head.

They left him there; they went out into the garden and sat awhile. Then the girls went to bed, leaving Emanuel alone.

In the morning they found the mourner still sitting in the same place. Had he passed the night there? They left him there undis-

turbed, and took their breakfasts in the kitchen. And all the blinds of every window were pulled down, so that the neighbours might know that Death was among them. All day long he stayed there. They sent food to him. Next morning he was still there sitting silent in his chair.

'He has lost,' said Emanuel, 'more than his daughter. He is in mourning for what, as he said blasphemously, he should feel more than anything else. He is thinking how he can get back again to his old life. It does him good to be alone and to think.'

For four days the bereaved father sat in the place of mourning. But no friends came. None of them, in fact, knew the private residence of Mr. Sydney Bernard—which, for many reasons, he did not disclose to his friends of the Turf. Had they known, the private residence would have been besieged, and the week of mourning would have met with scant respect. For behold! It was a time in which the friends of this bookmaker inquired after him in vain. He was broken.

That was pretty certain. It was rumoured that he could not, by many thousands, meet his engagements. Loud were the curses of those who had lost their money, or had lost their winnings. Many gallant craft, manned by bold bookmakers, went down in that fearful season, when nothing came off for the unhappy bookmakers, and every race was a race for the backer, and the favourites romped in gaily. The shore was strewn with wreck and broken timbers. And the bookmakers—what became of them? Go ask of the evening breeze—the cold breeze of December—when it blows chill and eager across the lonely Heath of Newmarket. You may hear the voice of their shades—their pale ghosts—in that evening breeze—lamenting the fatal run which laid them low. It was well for Mr. Sydney Bernard that he was nowhere seen abroad at this bad time. He vanished. No one knew that he was mourning the death of a beloved daughter. Men whispered that he was in retreat—that he had been seen by victims at Boulogne, at Brussels, at Ostend.

For four long days he sat in dignity and silence in that front parlour, no longer the pupil room. Clara remained to lend any assistance that might be wanted. They all, except the mourner, continued to take their meals in the kitchen. It was a time of silence, except for whispers and for the sobs of Alma. The meals were in no way festive. Otherwise, it was mourning without grief.

'I cannot go to see her,' said Clara, 'without my father's leave. After a bit he will give it, and then I will go. But you can go, Francesca. Poor Nell! And after all, to marry such a Jackanapes! If I did marry a Christian, it should be a decent sort. But that fellow? Oh!'

And during these days there was no talk at all of the Great Invention.

For four days the mourner occupied that chair in solemn silence. He sat in it all day long. Perhaps he sat in it all night long as well, for they found him there in the morning, and left him there in the evening.

'Why does he make all this pretence?' asked Francesca. 'Surely it is enough to say, once for all, that she is dead.'

'The Law,' said Emanuel, 'commands that a daughter of Israel shall marry in her father's tribe; it is the Law. If the Law is broken the guilty woman is outside the Law. In ancient days she would be stoned. Of many Jewesses it is related that they have been seduced from their religion by Christian lovers; terrible things have been told of the wrath and revenge of their own people; how one was captured and taken home to have her nose cut off, and so sent back disfigured to her lover; and another, the mistress of a Crusader, to whom a Jew was a name of horror, was denounced by her own brother as a Jewess to her lover, who handed her over to be burned alive.'

'Emanuel, for Heaven's sake spare me.'

'The Chronicles of your People are not all of meekness and submission, child. When a Jewess leaves the Faith she is dead by the Law. This man follows the ancient cus-

tom, though the Law is no longer maintained in its pristine rigour.'

'Well,' said Francesca, 'I think it would be more dignified for Nelly's father to give over this foolish pretence of mourning, and more simple to say, if he means it, that he will speak to his daughter no more.'

On the fourth day, however, the mourning was brought to a sudden stop. And that in a very surprising and unexpected manner.

It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Francesca, with the aid of the little maid (who moved about on tiptoe, spoke in whispers, as if in the presence of death, and from time to time sat down to cry in the corner of her apron), had just completed (so rapid was her progress) a fruit pie for dinner—a pie containing red currants and raspberries, which is an excellent dish, especially when it is served as the Christians have it, with cream and milk. As the Chosen People take their fruit pies without milk, it is not so good. The task despatched, she mounted the kitchen stairs, and looked out

of the garden door. Through the hanging branches of the Virginia creeper, she saw Emanuel sitting as usual at his bench at work, bareheaded in the hot July sun. Since the disaster of Nelly's elopement, she had said nothing of the Discovery. From the parlour there came voices: some one was with the Mourner. It was a loud and cheery voice. Now when Eliphaz the Temanite, and the other Comforters, visited Job the Mourner, they spoke in hushed voice, and with bated breath. Then the parlour door was thrown open, and Mr. Sydney Bernard came forth briskly.

'Alma,' he shouted down the kitchen stairs. 'Pull up your blinds below; open the window. Come upstairs and pull up all the blinds, and open all the windows.'

'What do you mean, Mr. Bernard?' cried Francesca, turning round in astonishment. 'Are the days of mourning over? Have you forgiven Nelly? Is she restored to life?'

'We have mourned enough. As for forgiving, we shall see presently. I am going away with my brother. I don't know when I

shall come back.' He replied in short, abrupt sentences, and hurried back to the parlour, shutting the door carefully behind him. Something had happened to change his religious gloom into a mood resembling the opposite.

What happened, in fact, was as follows. His brother, the dealer of Mortimer Street, came to see him.

'Nelly is dead,' said Mr. Bernard, looking up from the Stool of Mourning. 'My daughter Preciada is dead.'

'Ay, ay. This is as it should be. Yes. I know all about it. Brother, haven't you mourned long enough? Come, we are not Rabbis. Perhaps, when you have heard what I have found out, you will get up and go out, and give over mourning, and look cheerful again.'

'I can never look cheerful again. Did not Clara tell you? It is not only that Nelly is dead. I am ruined. I may just as well stay here, where none of them will find me. I've been thinking all the time, in this quiet

place, what to do. I can think here. But I see no way out of it. My name is gone. I am ruined, brother.'

'I know all about that, too. Now, Sydney, you know I don't talk wild about money, so listen. If I show you how to win back your name and your credit again as good as ever, and better—much better—without any loss to you of name or reputation, wouldn't you give over this sackcloth and ashes? Not but what you've done the right thing, brother.'

Sydney Bernard sat upright in his chair. Then, being rather stiff, after sitting with bowed head and round shoulders upon a little cane-bottomed chair for four days and four nights, or thereabouts, he rose slowly, and stretched himself, rubbing his legs as one grooms a horse.

'No, brother,' he said. 'You are certainly not one of those who talk wild about money; you know better. What is it you mean?'

Mr. Angelo pulled up the blind of the darkened room, and threw open the window.

Then he sat down in the chair of the Mourner, and began to unfold his tale.

'Nelly is married,' he said, 'to a certain Anthony Hayling.'

'I don't want to hear his name,' interrupted the injured father. 'Don't mention him to me, or the girl either.'

'Let me tell the story my own way. When it is told, you shall have your look-in. It's worth telling, as you will acknowledge. Anthony Hayling, five days ago, when he married Nelly, was clerk in some chemical works. He is now dismissed for incompetence. He has, therefore, no employment for the present, and no means. That's a good beginning for the married pair, isn't it? The young man is the only son of one Anthony Hayling, Editor and Proprietor of an insignificant paper called the *Friend of Labour*. His mother is a drunken drab, neither more nor less, whom his father married at Poplar when he was playing at being a sailor before the mast. But his father—listen now—is a superior kind of man, as I said; he has been

a common sailor; for many years he was a sailor, first a common sailor before the mast, then a mate on a sailing-ship. I believe she was in the Currant and Levant line, and she was owned by one of Us, from whom I learned these particulars. Now it isn't usual, is it, for a common sailor to become Editor of a paper? I've got some copies of the paper. It is full of ideas, and practical ideas, too.' Mr. Angelo laughed softly. 'To think of the pains and trouble taken just in trying to persuade the working-man of the simplest things, and all to no purpose. For he is a Fool, and he remains a Fool. And we, who carry the bag, reap the fruits of his Foolishness. However, there we are. Common sailor, mate in a sailing-ship in the Levant trade, editor of a Labour paper, man with large ideas, philanthropist if you like, man with the manners and the language and the bearing of a gentleman—that is the father of your son-in-law. As for the boy himself, he is a weak, poor creature, vain and shallow. He will give trouble.'

'Go on. I am listening.'

'I first saw the paper in Emanuel's hands. He wrapped up some of his work in it. I looked at it, and asked him how he came by it. He told me that the Editor was an old friend of his—Emanuel knows half the world—and that he had been once a sailor. Also that he was not a common sailor, but one who could think and speak. "So," says I, "what is the name of this uncommon sailor?" "Anthony Hayling," says Emanuel. I thought very little more about it till I heard the news of Nelly's marriage. Who was she married to? Anthony Hayling; Anthony Hayling. Rather odd Christian name for father and son both to have, isn't it? And then—you know in my line of business it is always useful to know something of the peerage—I remembered that there was an Earl of Hayling who went away from his estates twenty years ago, came back once about fifteen years ago, and is reported to have been seen somewhere Limehouse way; but this is uncertain. His Christian name was Anthony; his father's

and his grandfather's name was Anthony. Now, do you begin to suspect what is coming?'

'Do you mean to tell that this boy is the son of——' Needless to say that Mr. Bernard jumped.

'Wait. The things put together worked upon me so that I had no rest till I went down myself to the office of the paper. Fortunately, the Editor was in the shop. I bought a copy, and I had a little talk with him. Brother, you know a gentleman when you see him? To be sure you do. You've learned it in your way of business. So have I. We both have to do with gentlemen. The thing can't be made by spending a few thousands, can it? A man gets rich, but he don't become a gentleman that way, does he? Some of our People think he can, but you and I know better. It's a mistake. You can't make a gentleman all at once, spend as much money as you like upon him.'

'I know a gentleman,' said the Bookmaker, 'as soon as I see him. Sometimes

he's a Juggins. Sometimes he's a Leg; yet a gentleman. Go on.'

'The Editor of the paper is a gentleman. Very good. So I went straight to the Earl's solicitors, whom I found without much trouble, and I asked if they knew anybody who could identify the Earl. There were three men at least within reach, besides any number of his old tenants and people. One was his old valet, who has now got a public-house close to Jermyn Street; one was an old clerk in the office; one was a partner. I took the clerk with me. I drove in a cab to the office; I planted him on the kerb outside the office, and told him to look in and watch, and say nothing. I went in, and presently brought out my man to the door in conversation. "Did you see him?" I asked the clerk when we walked away. "I did," says he. "Who is he?" I asked. "He's the Earl of Hayling," says the clerk. "Will you swear it?" I asked. "Anywheres," he says. So I drove him home again. Now, brother, the next thing was to find out that the Earl was

married, and where. Five-and-twenty years ago he was a common merchantman's sailor. Where would he be married? There are only half a dozen places—Poplar, Shadwell, Wapping, Limehouse, Stepney—not many more. I tried Poplar first, and there I found the marriage. He was married in the church. "Anthony Hayling, sailor, to Phœbe Dickson, spinster." And a year later the baptism of Anthony, son of Anthony and Phœbe Hayling. There is no doubt whatever. Your son-in-law, brother, is none other than the Viscount Selsey, son and heir of the Right Honourable the Earl of Hayling, and your daughter is the Viscountess Selsey—Lady Selsey.'

'Is this true? Are you quite — quite sure?' Needless to say that Mr. Bernard gasped.

'It is quite true. Moreover, the estate is worth—I don't know, landed property isn't what it was—thirty thousand a year, perhaps, nominal rent-roll. And for a good many years this has been piling up. There may be a quarter of a million or more by this

time. There's a Mr. Harold Alleyne—fellow who wants to marry Francesca here—his father was a brother of the Earl, and was allowed to enjoy the estates until he died. Accumulations? I should think so! Very good. Now, I didn't stop there. I went round to see the boy; pretty low I found him, with his wife crying. So I wasted no time. I told him that you were infuriated. I made him understand that you could, if you chose, follow him wherever he went. And then I hinted at what might be done. Finally, I made him agree to a certain proposal. If, by my means, or your means, he should find himself placed in a position of competence, or ease, he would pay all your liabilities —his father-in-law's liabilities—due at the present day in gratitude. He's of age, and he signed, and I witnessed and brought the paper away. We may, perhaps, get it put so as to look better, but it's safe; that's the main thing. And now, brother, you are prepared to forgive that dear girl, when she's acknowledged to be Lady Selsey, and be-

comes an ornament of the British Aristocracy. Brother! He's a Christian, and he's a Fool; but it's a real lift for the family, isn't it?'

'Why, yes,' Mr. Bernard replied, slowly; 'it certainly seems to make a difference. Do you think that money will come along in time? One mustn't keep 'em waiting much longer.'

'When a girl runs off with a pauper,' continued his brother, 'that's one thing; when she runs off with a noble lord, that's another. Now, look here; I'm so certain that it's all right, that I'm going to take you right away to your own office in Bouverie Street. You will come up smiling. You will invite all the people you know to come up. I've got my cheque-book, and I'll draw the cheques for you as fast and as far as you like. You can send word by messenger—by post—by telegraph—that the money is all right. And I've got an advertisement for you. See'—he pulled out his pocket-book and produced a paper. "Mr. Sydney Bernard begs to inform his friends that a sudden illness has incapaci-

tated him from attending to business during the last four or five days. He has now returned, and can be found at the usual place." How's that?'

'Brother,' said Mr. Bernard, 'you're not only the lucky one of the family, but you deserve your luck.'

'Lucky one? Why, what do you call yourself? Father of the Viscountess Selsey, who is daughter-in-law of the Right Honourable the Earl of Hayling? Me—the lucky one? Why—I can leave Clara a hundred thousand when I go, and yet I don't believe I could get so much as a Baronet for her. Now come with me. Carry it off with a good bold air. You ruined? You a defaulter? Stuff and rubbish! Have up the champagne! Pour it out like water. All a mistake—all that infernal knock over—congestion of the liver. Hit hard? Not a bit of it! Didn't do well; naturally, nobody did. But a blow like that is easy met. Come, brother.'

'I think,' said Mr. Sydney Bernard, getting

his hat, 'that it would be sinful not to forgive the poor girl under the circumstances. I've done what is right. I mourned for her.'

'And I will say this, brother. You have shown a very proper and becoming spirit. It looked at first as if it was a monstrous Family Disgrace. As such you treated it. We are now, however, allied to the English Aristocracy. We shall all mount, brother. We shall mount higher by this fortunate alliance. But the boy is an arrant fool. And oh!'—he grasped his brother's hand—'think of the old place and the old days in Middlesex Street! Only think! Money and the Cromwell Road for me—the House of Lords for you—or for your daughter, which is the same thing. Wonderful! And the father and the old grandfather still in the little shop with the bundles of sticks! Wonderful, I call it!'

CHAPTER XXXI

AT THE SIGN OF THE 'FRIEND OF LABOUR'

THE Revolutionary Company of Four were holding a Council at the office of the *Friend of Labour*—that little back office which looked out upon a formerly whitewashed wall at the bottom of a well, into which the sun never penetrated—it was, I believe, in reality, though this is not generally known—the well in which Truth herself once resided. For that reason the *Friend of Labour*, though fitly edited here, is not popular. Conspiracies, however, are very properly concocted in corners and hatched in dark places.

'Oh!' cried Francesca, feeling herself in this dark room at the bottom of a well, 'here we are all hidden away in a corner with this terrible Invention of ours! And we ought

to be receiving delegates from the whole world in St. Paul's Cathedral, and telling them that there will be no more war!'

'Yet you have had Visions, child,' said Emanuel, jealously.

'Oh! my Visions! What are my Visions compared with your wisdom, my Master? If you are quite sure that the world will at once rise to the full meaning of the thing——'

'It is not my Wisdom—it is the voice of Prophecy. How it will be accomplished I know not. The world is full of evil—that we know very well. In the Reign of Peace iniquity will exist no longer. That also we know.'

'Emanuel,' said Mr. Hayling, speaking slowly, as was his wont, 'you carried me off my head the other night, so that I could say nothing. I was knocked off my legs—I heeled over like a ship in a gale. I came home in a dream, my brain whirling. I felt as if the old neglected prophecies were all coming true together. Everybody was coming

back—Arthur, Charlemagne, Frederick Redbeard—your Hebrew Prophecies that we regard so little were coming true—the Reign of Justice was to begin without any more delay. It was wonderful, truly wonderful! I looked at my sleeping wife and told myself that she would drink no more: we should all be converted: we shall all become Righteous. I have never been so much moved in all my life—not even when I resolved to give up everything and share the Common Lot.'

'The Word is great, and great were the hearts of those who heard it,' said Emanuel, softly. 'Only a noble heart can understand a noble Prophecy.'

'In the morning came reflection, and reflection brought doubt. And, if you please, Emanuel, we will consider the position a little.'

'Let us consider it from every point of view.'

'Your Invention, when it is divulged to the world, will enable a single person—a child—to destroy a whole army—or a city—

or a fleet—at a distance—unseen—unsuspected.'

'It is nothing less than that. Add—that the composition is simple. Anyone can make it.'

'Very well. The first effect, unless the general Righteousness begins simultaneously with the possession of this new power, will certainly be the destruction of London—Paris—New York—every great city in the world.'

'The Reign of Righteousness,' said Emanuel firmly, 'will begin at once.'

'Well—but if not—the mere possession of such a power will be too great for many minds. They will not be able to resist the temptation to use that power. London, I suppose, will be destroyed from all quarters at once. Every new method of destruction produces at first a company of destroyers. In the sixteenth century they poisoned each other—there were poisoners by the hundred; seventy years ago, when the lucifer match was discovered, they set fire to hayricks with

it; now they blow up houses with dynamite. Presently they get tired of destruction; the thing ceases to present temptation. But when your invention becomes known we shall certainly begin with that power of universal havoc and a period of maddening terror.'

'No—no. It is impossible. There will ensue immediately the Reign of Righteousness.'

Anthony shook his head. 'Suppose, however,' he went on, 'that the method was kept a secret. What would happen? Suppose that we kept the secret in our own country. Suppose that it was guarded—say, kept in the possession of two men only, handing the secret down from one to another. We should then begin with one war, and only one—say, with France—just to show that there never could be another with a nation which possessed this stupendous secret. We should begin by destroying Cherbourg, with all the ships and the dockyard, and the forts and every soldier, sailor, man, woman, and child in the place. This accomplished, once, and

only once—just to show what we could do—that war, and all other wars, so far as we were concerned, would be ended. Suppose that this went on for four hundred years, during which no other nation acquired our secret. What would happen? Exactly what happened to the people of Constantinople—enormous wealth; security almost absolute; greed and lust of power; tyranny; villainies of every kind; cowardice; cruelty. You can no more trust a nation than you can trust an individual with irresponsible power.'

'That is quite true. But I am not proposing to give this secret to any nation. It must be given to the whole world. Then War itself will cease, suddenly and for ever. The world will address itself—it must—to the advancement of humanity.'

'You will give it to the world. Well, then, let us see what would happen. At first, as I said, there would be wanton and wholesale death and destruction. That would presently die out. What next? You say, no more War. I think that War would be made a

hundred times more exciting, and, therefore, a hundred times more attractive. You would have no army. There would be scattered about companies of scouts; they would kill each other at sight: they would prevent each other from approaching within distance of a town. But there would be no more towns, and no longer any great congregations of men. Fleets would be useless; armies useless; forts useless; towns would invite destruction. The scouts would crawl about separately destroying houses; every man would be a soldier. We should go back a thousand years, and go to war on every—even the smallest—provocation. Men would fight duels which might last for years, chasing each other. Emanuel, I do not think your invention would prevent War.'

'It must. You could never expect men to live under the apprehension of being destroyed at any moment.'

'Why not? In the old times the enemy suddenly came out of the forest and fell upon the people and killed them all. They lived

in apprehension, but they lived. We all live in apprehension. Fire, pestilence, accident, sudden death may always fall upon us. You will add a new terror to life, my friend—and a very terrible terror; but you will not abolish War. What do you think, Mr.—Alleyne? It is odd that I did not catch your name the other night. There is an Alleyne family, I think, which has a title in it.'

'My uncle is—or was—the Earl of Hayling. He is lost.'

'Lost!' repeated the Editor. 'Strange! Lost! Doubtless, he is dead. Well, sir, may I ask what you think?'

'I think,' Harold replied, 'that the terror caused by war under these new conditions would be too great for war to be continued. The breaking-up of great towns would be necessary, I suppose, as you point out. But that might help Emanuel's beginning of a new Rule. With new communities would be destroyed some of the present evils.'

'The world is growing ripe for the abolition of war,' Emanuel went on. 'The

soldiers have found a voice. Twenty years ago the Germans said loudly that they would fight no more for King or Kaiser. The rank-and-file know better now what is meant by War. They see illustrated papers. Many have seen a battle-field. I myself saw the assault on Plevna and the place the day after. I have seen the dead bodies, lying where they were slain, of Hicks Pasha's army. No one who has ever seen such a sight would desire to see another, unless he were a Napoleon. Well, this is under present conditions—when only a tenth, or an eighth, or a sixth, fall on the field, the rest escape. Under the new system, they would know that not one would escape. Who would go out to War under such conditions?'

Mr. Hayling shook his head. 'The wit of man can alter tactics to suit all conditions. But since War would become more scientific, it would more and more attract the men of intellect. It would be no more a war of armies: it would be a war in which brain was set against brain, cunning against cunning,

with a certainty that blunder meant death. Why, war would become the most delightful pursuit possible. There would be no need to hamper the generals with private soldiers: the army would consist wholly of scientific men, who would stake their lives upon the superiority of their science over that of the other men. Think of the preparation; the colleges; the continual new discoveries—until somebody at last—you yourself, Emanuel, in another body—would discover a way to produce invisibility! That done, I don't know. We will wait to consider the effect of invisibility.'

'These,' said Emanuel, 'are idle speculations. It is to me certain that no inventions or discoveries which advance the human race happen before man is ready for them. Every great invention coincides with and directs some intellectual movement. It seems as if it was given to the world at the time when it would be useful, and not before. To you, Anthony, I speak as a fool, but I am a Jew; and, therefore, one who believes in the

Prophets who belong to the People. Therefore, since the Prophets proclaim a Reign of Righteousness, when War shall cease, I must believe that my invention, which I am certain will abolish War, will also begin that Reign of Righteousness. With War, at least, will vanish ambitions, conquests, annexations, the chief burden of taxation, oppressions of kings, conquerors, and alien races. All this gone, the world will be free to accomplish the destiny of man.'

'I remember, Emanuel,' Mr. Hayling interrupted, 'in the old days you dwelt continually on a world where there should be no more war. This has always been in your mind.'

'"Violence shall no more be in thy land: wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise." These are the words of the Prophet—the Prophet Isaiah.'

'Emanuel'—Mr. Hayling stood with his back to the empty fireplace, his hands in his pockets—'you have done a big thing. It is

the biggest thing, I believe, discovered since the world began. But it is a terrible thing: one's imagination reels at contemplating it. To think of giving this instrument to the whole world—to the maddened Anarchist, to the hardened dynamiter, to the despairing outcast, to every madman who thinks himself injured by the world—I say, Emanuel, that I have been thinking of this thing ever since you first spoke to me about it. And I tremble. But, my friend, as I read your Prophets, the world has to become righteous before War ceases. This is to be the effect—not the cause—of righteousness, and we are a long way yet, I fear, from that thrice-happy time.'

'That is what I wanted to say,' murmured Francesca.

The room in which they sat was always dark at the brightest time of the day. Now, when the sun had set and twilight was beginning outside, it was so dim that those who spoke could only see the shadowy outlines and the indistinct white faces of each other. This made the talk seem, to one, at least, of the

four, more solemn. Mr. Hayling spoke slowly—his was the speech of one who feels his way in the darkness, Emanuel's was the speech of one who stands on solid ground.

'Can one, by causing War to cease, bring righteousness into the world?' asked the Editor. 'I think not. For my own part, I see interposed between the world of to-day and the world of that vision obstacles innumerable. How are we to get rid of them? There is the man who sits upon the land and says—mine; there is the man who takes the workman's work and says—mine; there is the man who creates posts of great income and high place and says—mine. I see every man fighting for himself against every other man. Before the world of the Vision arrives, we must be fighting every man beside his brother, not against him. Your new-born Righteousness, Emanuel, cannot exist in such a world as this. Why, the very thought, the idea, of a Common Life has perished. Yet the Common Life has, age after age, been recognised to be the best and noblest. It is gone. There is no more

brotherhood left among us—except only when men stand shoulder to shoulder and go forth to war. That is the only time when men are brothers—brothers-in-arms. We are no longer brothers in work—brothers in art—brothers even in religion. The guilds are gone; the companies are dead; the monasteries are gone. And you would divide them still more. Let us rather restore that brotherhood of man in work, in communities, everywhere. Let us make them obey authority, and work by order, and practise righteousness, even if only, at first, *because they must.* When you have done all this, Emanuel, you will have gone far to make that Reign of Righteousness possible. I preach every week the Common Life, the Brotherhood, but no one heeds. I beat the air, and now I am talking my own leading articles,' he added with a laugh and a sigh.

'Go on, please,' said Francesca. 'Talk to us from another leading article.'

'Well, I have been living among the people for twenty years, and I have eyes, and

I have watched. I see what is going on and I guess at what is coming. I see—everybody must see—a whole world sinking deeper and deeper into a mad and selfish individualism, while a few voices are uplifted in expostulation. What is coming? The degradation of the working man and the Reign of Riches, which is a very different thing, my friend, from your Reign of Peace. Perhaps something will happen to avert the evils before us. If not I see tyrannies worse than any we have yet seen; law growing stronger for purposes of repression; rebellion rendered more and more difficult; men becoming more and more slavish. Nothing more horrible than the Tyranny of the Man who has the Bag. I have seen—myself—something of the power of wealth. It is a dreadful thing that a man should have any power by reason of his money. Young lady'—he turned to Francesca—'you have the air of wealth—I know not how. If you are rich, pray that your money may be taken from you; if you are poor, pray that you may never be rich.

Believe me, there is no life to be desired more than the Common Lot with its chances and its burdens. Without War the rich would become richer, the poor would become poorer. War keeps up a caste which despises money-getting and fosters brotherhood, and promotes ungenerous action: without War there would be a few rich kings and a hundred million slaves. Emanuel—leave us War until we have learned once more to live in brotherhood of work.'

'We are told,' Emanuel repeated, 'that with the cessation of War shall come the Reign of Righteousness. How can we doubt the word of the Prophet?'

'You spoke of choosing the Common Lot,' said Harold. 'Did you deliberately come to live among the people?'

'You are Mr. Anthony Harold Alleyne,' Mr. Hayling replied slowly. 'Well—I will tell you something. Perhaps it may help us in this counsel that we seek of each other.'

He considered for a moment. 'I had a big house once, and a great fortune. I saw that my lot was not so desirable as the Com-

mon Lot. And I shook off the dust of my shoes, and I embraced the lot of the working world. I have been a great deal happier, believe me, than ever I was before. I have lived in this world ever since. I have married in this world. . . . We must prove all things . . . and endure all things . . . and now I shall never go back to the world of ease. I am dead to it, and my heirs, if I have any'—he glanced at Harold—'may inherit as soon as they please.'

Harold listened without much curiosity. His mind was full of speculation concerning the effect of Emanuel's discovery. Besides, he suspected nothing. I know not what further revelations Mr. Hayling would have made, or what reservations, but at this point the Conspirators were interrupted, and the subsequent proceedings rendered other revelations unnecessary.

'Who is that outside?' Mr. Hayling called.

CHAPTER XXXII

FORGIVENESS

The interruption began with a murmur of whispering voices and the sound of feet. The office boy had long since gone; but the door was open; no fear that any of the people outside would want to steal copies of the *Friend of Labour*.

Mr. Hayling stopped; someone turned the handle of the door and hesitated. Then this person turned it again, and opened the door timidly. It was a girl. In the dim light Francesca saw that it was Nelly. She stood in the doorway, and she held her handkerchief to her eyes. She was crying. An unseen hand behind pushed her gently forwards. She was, in fact, shoved in—evidently against her wish.

'Why, Nelly!' cried Francesca, jumping up.

'Oh, Francesca! You here? Oh! How did you come here?' Nelly caught her hand. 'Don't go away! Don't leave me! Anthony brought me—he is outside—he brought me—to tell his father——'

'To tell Mr. Hayling? Why, does he not know?'

'Who is this young lady?' Mr. Hayling asked. 'And what am I to be told?'

'This is your son's wife, Mr. Hayling. I thought you knew. They were married nearly a week ago, at the Registrar's.'

'My son is married, is he? Oh, well! it is the custom of young men of his station.' The father spoke without surprise, as if the thing was quite usual. 'He might have told me; but, perhaps, that is not the custom with young men of his station. You know my son's wife, then, Francesca? Young lady—at present I have heard only your Christian name—may I venture to ask further particulars?'

'Her name,' Francesca replied, 'was Nelly Bernard. It was a clandestine marriage, because her father, who is of the Jewish race, would not allow her to marry a Christian.'

'Ah? Yet I had never learned that my son was a Christian.'

'And so they have been married without her father's consent—or your knowledge.'

'Well,' said the bridegroom's father, quietly; 'what is done cannot be undone. I am relieved, at least, from the responsibility of granting consent. I hope, therefore, that it may turn out for my son's improvement, and my daughter-in-law's happiness. Let me look at you, my dear.' He got up and lit the gas-jet hanging over his table. 'So—your name is Nelly? Let me look at you.' He took her hands and looked into her face. 'You are pretty, my dear, and you look as if you were good.' He kissed her. 'Where is my son? Where is Anthony?' He still held the girl's hand.

Anthony the younger came out of the

front shop, where the evening shades prevailed. By the flaring gaslight he looked so common and so mean that Francesca wondered how the girl could endure him. But at the sight of the assembled company he straightened himself, lifted his head, coughed, and made a poor attempt to carry things off with an air of confidence, but with small success. He was evidently ill at ease and dejected.

'Well, Dad!' he said, trying to be airy; 'I've got married, you see, and here is my wife, and a very good wife too.'

'I hope so. Some sons take their parents into confidence; but never mind.' He still held Nelly by the hand.

'I couldn't, because, you see, Nelly's father wouldn't have heard of the thing, and so, to prevent rows, we told neither him nor you, but just went to the Registrar, and were married on the quiet. Now it's done, it's too late to object, isn't it?'

'Quite too late. I should not think of

objecting. You have, I believe, about five-and-twenty shillings a week; it is not much to marry on; I hope you will make it do.'

'Oh!' cried Nelly. 'But he's lost his place. We've got nothing, nothing at all. Oh! what shall we do? What shall we do?'

'It's this way, Dad.' The young man cleared his throat. 'We're all friends here, I hope. It's this way. Last Wednesday there was a meeting of our Local Parliament, and I made a speech. Come, now, you first taught me that free speech is the greatest privilege of a free country. You're always preaching that; you can't deny it. So I made a speech, and very fine and free it was—all against property, and the House of Lords, and the Church, and every blessed thing. A grand speech it was—eloquent, they said, and powerful; everybody said so. I believe it's in Mr. Gladstone's hands this minute, and I shouldn't wonder if he doesn't offer me something good. I've been considering for a long time whether to go into the

political line or not. This decides me. I shall go into that line as soon as I get an opening.'

'But about your place?' said his father.

'Well, I'm telling you. The Manager of our Works sent for me, and asked if I was the speaker of that speech. I told him I was, and proud I was of it, too. "So," he says, "you may just take yourself and your mischievous speeches somewhere else," says he. "We don't want destroyers of Property on these premises. So you may pack," says he. That's what he said. After that I suppose you'll put in your paper that we live in a free country, and that everybody may say just what he pleases.'

'You have lost your place for making a foolish speech.'

'The Manager said a lot more—all tommy rot—about neglect of work, and gas and froth. I tell you what, Dad—it's jealousy. It was him or me. He knew that before long he'd have to go and make room for me if I stayed. Well—every man for himself.

I don't blame him. I call it lucky, too, because it now decides me. The Public Line for me, as soon as there's an opening. The next General Election, say.'

'And meantime?'

'All I've got to do is to speak regular at our Parliament, so as to get known for a good man. That's what I tell Nelly. It's all right, if she'd only believe it.'

'Meantime?'

'Why——' He shifted his feet uneasily. 'There's hundreds of people only too glad to get hold of me, if there's a vacancy. Not often that a man of my powers goes a-begging.'

'Meantime?'

'Once in the House, you'll see how I'll make 'em sit up! Oh! I know! Question on question. Speech after speech. Then we turn out the Government and it's Home Secretary, or nothing, for me.'

'Very good indeed. Meantime?'

'Oh! Meantime—I don't know. Meantime, I can change my name and go on the

boards with the banjo, and show 'em how to sing.'

'He thinks that he can sing and play well enough for a Music-hall,' cried Nelly. 'But he can't. He must practise ever so much first.'

'Meantime?' the father repeated, turning to the wife.

'He must look for a place somewhere. And we thought that perhaps you'd help, although we ought to have told you first. And if you won't forgive us either—and we have got no friends—then—I shall wish'—tears filled her eyes again.

Francesca laid her hand upon Nelly's shoulder. 'You've got one friend, dear Nelly,' she said. 'One friend at least.'

'She has two at least,' Mr. Hayling added. 'But this is a question which must be answered somehow. Meantime? You have got to begin the world—how much have you got to begin it with? Less than a week's wages, I suppose? I had about the same. But then, you see, I had a trade—I was a mariner—and you, my son, are only a clerk.

Mariners are scarce; clerks are plenty. What can I do for you? Silver and gold have I little—still, there is this house. There are two or three rooms upstairs that you can have for nothing. There is also an afflicted woman upstairs. Her affliction is such that she must get drunk once every day. This makes her a difficult companion for anyone, especially a girl of decent tastes. Can you live with such a companion, Nelly? If so, you shall live rent free.'

'No, no!' cried the son, shuddering. 'We can't live here.'

'I must, you see, and I do. It is my burden. It is the thing that is laid upon me. Well, we shall see what else can be done. And again—meantime?'

That question was destined to get no reply.

More steps in the outer office. Francesca, who was nearest the door, looked round. In the shop she saw Mr. Aldebert Angelo; behind him, in shadow—could it be?—Mr.

Sydney Bernard himself. What did they want?

Mr. Angelo stepped into the room, leaving his brother outside. At the sight of the assembled multitude, he looked astonished.

'Uncle Angelo!' cried Nelly.

'You here, Nelly?' he replied. 'Certainly I did not expect to meet you, my dear—though why not?' He took her hands and kissed her—actually kissed her, though she had married a Christian! 'And this is your husband, I suppose—young Mr. Anthony—Anthony—shall we say for the moment Anthony Hayling? I have been hoping to make your acquaintance, Anthony, my nephew, for some days—ever since I heard the—the unexpected news. I wish you joy—every joy—nephew Anthony!' He shook hands warmly with the young man.

'Uncle Angelo!' murmured the bride. 'Is it possible?'

'And you, too, my niece,' he added. 'My dear Nelly, I wish you every joy. You look every inch a bride!'

'Oh!' murmured Nelly. 'Is it possible?'

'Mr. Hayling,' this wonderful uncle continued—it is always the function of uncles to do the most unexpected and, of course, the most benevolent of things—'Mr. Hayling, as for the moment I may call you, I came here in order to have a few minutes' conversation with you, alone, concerning the future of this young couple. I find a company assembled which I certainly did not expect. I believe, Sir,' he turned to Harold, 'that you are Mr. Harold Alleyne; and I must say that of all places in the world—as Mr. Hayling will understand—this is the very last place I should have expected to meet you—as you will also understand in a few minutes.'

Mr. Hayling sprang to his feet. 'Stop!' he cried. 'I forbid you to go on. If you mean what you say, I forbid you to go on. What right, Sir, have you to interfere with any plans of mine?'

'If you alone were concerned, Mr. Hayling—to call you so for a moment—I should

certainly obey. But there are other interests —I allude to those of my niece—to be considered. I am sorry, Mr. Harold Alleyne, that her interests should conflict with your own.'

'I do not in the least understand,' said Harold, 'what all this means. But as it is evidently not meant for my ear——' He rose and took his hat.

'Not yet, Mr. Alleyne. Wait a moment. It concerns you most intimately, and as we are all concerned in this most important business—this great discovery——' (Another great discovery? Francesca felt that if Mr. Aldebert Angelo was going to proclaim a second newly-invented method of revolutionising humanity, she should go off her head) '—all present concerned,' he added, 'I will announce it before you all. My business is very short. I have only to inform you, my Lord'—he called Mr. Hayling 'my Lord,' and all stared blankly at him—'that I have this day acquainted your former solicitors with your present place of residence, and that

certain persons, whose evidence cannot be doubted or disputed, will be brought here to-morrow morning, in order to establish your Lordship's identity beyond a doubt. Noblemen of your Lordship's exalted rank cannot be allowed to let their very existence remain a matter of doubt. Besides, there are the interests of my niece——'

'Uncle Angelo!' cried Nelly.

'Emanuel!' cried Mr. Hayling, throwing himself back in his chair as one defeated. 'You knew—you were the only person who knew. But you could not betray me! No—you could not. Besides, you never asked my name.'

'These things do not concern me,' said Emanuel. 'I do not remember them or talk of them.'

'What Lord?' asked Harold, changing colour. 'He is not—surely——'

'And there are also the interests,' Mr. Aldebert Angelo interrupted him with a gesture inviting attention, 'of my nephew by marriage—your Lordship's only son and heir.'

'Son and heir?' cried Anthony the Younger.

'Patience, nephew. A little patience. Now, my Lord, I assure you that there is no doubt possible about your identity. I have taken the trouble to establish that. Permit me to remind you of the past. It is five-and-twenty years since you told your solicitors that you were going away and that you should never come back again. You executed a deed authorising your brother, Lord Guy, to enjoy your rents and live in your house. He died ten years ago. Since then the rents have accumulated. About fifteen years ago you were seen at Limehouse and recognised. It is not certain at this moment—or was not, until now—whether you were alive or dead. You have married a wife; you have one child, a son—who stands here, and is my nephew by marriage. You had resolved to live in obscurity and to die unknown; you had also resolved that your son should never know his true name and his rank.'

'Oh! come—I say,' murmured the son and heir.

'But, you see, other interests have arisen which do not permit this resolution to be carried out. Therefore, having discovered this secret, we must claim, in justice to my niece, whom we cannot allow to be thrust aside, that your son shall openly take his true place in the world. That is to say, as the son of the Right Honourable the Earl of Hayling. And he must take his full title, namely, Anthony Viscount Selsey. And his wife, familiarly called Nelly, will henceforth become Preciada, Viscountess Selsey.'

The long-lost Earl sat down and drummed the table with his fingers. Had he been convicted of forgery he could not have looked more miserably guilty.

'Well,' he said, 'you appear to have got up the case. If you can identify me, there's nothing to be said, I suppose. I am Lord Hayling. What then?'

'You Lord Hayling?' cried Harold. 'And I never guessed. Good Heavens! I see the

likeness now, and the name—and the Christian name!'

'I thought I could never be found out. After five-and-twenty years! Where could a man possibly find a more sure and safe retreat from the other end of town than this slip of an office in the Mile-End Road? It never would have been found out but for this marriage. Well?' he turned on Mr. Angelo. 'Now that you have found out the truth, what good will it do you—or anybody else?'

'Good? I must remind you, my Lord, that it makes your son at least the heir to a very large property. We have not yet gone the length of despising property—despising property. Good? What good will it do? Really——'

'You lift this boy above the—the level to which he belongs; you give him wealth for which he is totally unprepared; you give him a position for which he is totally unfitted.'

'Oh! I say,' cried the son. 'I should like to know the position for which I am not fitted.'

His father made reply, speaking gravely—'My son, you have grown up with the ideas belonging to the life I intended you to occupy, neither wiser nor better than your neighbours. You are about to step into the ranks of those who are supposed to lead the world. You are at this moment unable to understand at all what has happened to you. Your income has been reckoned in shillings. It will now be—well, you will see. Your responsibilities will be such as you cannot even imagine. You will be the Head—you—of an old and honourable House. Take care that your sudden elevation does not prove a fatal curse to you. Nelly, my child, you have yet to learn how strong should be the shoulders of those who bear the burden of wealth.' He sighed heavily. 'I laid down that burden long ago. I could not, it appears, shake it off altogether. Harold, my nephew, believe me that I never meant this to be the end. I married—because I would share in full the Common Lot—a woman of my new position. I never intended that her son

should learn the truth. When I saw you first the other day I rejoiced to think that all should go to you. And I am truly grieved for your sake.'

'It needs not,' said Harold. 'I could never succeed so long as any doubt remained.'

'As for me, I remain here; and, my friends, I pray you, one thing. There is no necessity for anyone outside this room to know that the Editor of this little rag is—what he is.'

He looked round. Nelly had her hand on her husband's arm, and was gazing into his vacant face with wifely joy and admiration.

'Oh!' she cried, laughing and crying hysterically, 'you are quite wrong, Mr. Hayling — I mean, my Lord — about Anthony. He's fit for any place, and he can't have too much money. Oh! you don't know how clever he is; only he must practise a great deal more before he can go on the boards with the banjo, and I suppose he can't make any more speeches against the House of Lords

and the Queen now he's—oh!—a noble Lord himself. He understands that. You think you will ever be ashamed of him? No—no! Oh, you don't understand how clever he is!'

'If it depends upon you, Nelly,' said her father-in-law kindly, 'I think we never shall be ashamed of him. But who will look after his manners, I wonder?'

'I will,' said Mr. Angelo. 'You may leave him with me and my daughter Clara, now his cousin by marriage.'

'You are extremely good, Sir,' said Mr. Hayling, drily.

'As for manners,' the newly-created noble Lord by courtesy made haste to explain, 'I suppose I've got as good manners as they make. Look after my manners? Mine? You will? Not much! Look after your own, if you come to that!'

'Will you shake hands with me, Lord Selsey?' Harold made haste to allay the rising storm. 'I am your cousin. My name is Alleyne. If I can be of any assistance at the outset of your establishment——'

'I suppose he must have an establishment,' said the father grimly. 'Well, since it is no longer possible to deny or to conceal anything, I will call on my solicitors to-morrow morning and instruct them. Yes—you shall have an establishment fit for your new position. It's a dreadful thing for both of you, if you only knew it. As for me——' At this moment there was heard a crash overhead as of cups and saucers flung upon the floor, and a beating as of a chair or several chairs. The Earl of Hayling held up his finger. 'Listen!' he said, when the noise ceased. 'I entreat and pray you all most earnestly, for the sake of an unhappy and much afflicted woman, to spare her the knowledge of her true name and place.'

Then the woman overhead lifted her voice and began to revile her husband. No fishwife in Billingsgate ever used language so foul—Mrs. Hayling, remember, had married a common sailor before the mast, who was anxious to experience the Common Lot in all its branches. This fact sufficiently shows the

class or station to which she belonged, and it gave her the right, so to speak, to the strongest language which can be found in our tongue. The girls caught each other by the hand and trembled. The men looked at the husband with pity and hung their heads. My Lord Griselda stood quiet, patient. Presently the storm died away and ceased.

'It is unusual,' said Mr. Hayling, 'for her to wake up in the middle of a drunken sleep. This is a repetition of this afternoon's scene. I did not expect it. Gentlemen, you have heard the voice of the Countess of Hayling. This is the language which her Ladyship uses habitually, when she is in liquor. Her Ladyship is in liquor daily. You see that. She must stay—with me—here—down below—she belongs to—here—down below. She must stay where she is; and, because she is my wife, I must stay with her. It is the Common Lot, Emanuel.'

Mr. Angelo drew his niece out of the room.

'Nelly,' he said, 'we must now call you

Preciada. Nelly who taught the banjo is gone. Preciada, Lady Selsey, sits in silks and velvets. You shall have Clara to stand by you until you have learned how to behave. Come, my dear, here is somebody else ready to forgive. It couldn't be forgiven for a little clerk, but for a Viscount, of course——'

Then Nelly found herself face to face with her justly offended parent.

'Oh!' she cried. 'Can you ever forgive me, father?'

'I couldn't,' said Mr. Sydney Bernard, frankly, 'till the present turn of things. You may give me a kiss, my dear. There's country houses, my dear, and town houses, and a rent-roll, my dear, and accumulations, Nelly'—he kissed her fondly between each revelation — 'accumulations — they say a quarter of a million. Of course, it all belongs to the old man; but he's bound to look after you. Well, my dear, I have had a terrible bad time. I was ruined, and then you'd run away, and all. But your uncle found out, and I've paid off all—everyone—in full, and

with swagger. And now my name's as good as ever, and when your marriage is advertised, which it will be to-morrow in every paper all over the place, my name will be better than ever—father-in-law of a noble Lord. Kiss me, Nelly, and—I say'——his voice sank. 'Your husband's a Fool. So much the better for you. Humour him and govern him. I'll take care of him on the Turf. Oh! you'll be a happy woman, Nell.'

Her husband came out, trying to look like a lord.

'Anthony,' cried his wife, 'here's father! We're forgiven.'

'Forgiven? Why, of course.' Anthony, Junior — Son and Heir — Viscount Selsey, laughed scornfully. 'Who wouldn't forgive a noble Viscount? However, I don't bear malice—you're Nelly's father—let's all be friends—here's my hand, guv'nor—I forgive you, freely and truly—no more shall be said about the past; and I say, I suppose—between ourselves—there oughtn't to be any temporary difficulty about a little of the

ready, ought there? The Right Honourable the noble Lord—the Viscount Selsey—and his Lordship's noble consort — have got nothing in the world between them but eighteenpence and a couple of banjoes.'

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE LAST PIECE OF WORK

'I HAVE brought you,' said Emanuel, taking a finished panel from its paper wrapping, 'the last piece of work that I shall do for you.'

'Why?' It was in the Mortimer Street place of business, and the proprietor was at the receipt of custom. 'Why, Emanuel? Are you dissatisfied with the pay? No one in the trade will give you more. Find a man who offers you more, and I will go one better. If you don't work for me you will only go farther and fare worse. The next man will rob you, Emanuel. A man like you is made to be robbed.'

'I am never dissatisfied with any pay. The man who robs me does me little harm,

but he brings punishment upon himself to the third and fourth generation. Your pay is as good as any other man's: that is, good enough.'

'Better, Emanuel; because there is no one else in the trade who understands work as I do. I tell you frankly there is no finer wood-carving than yours to be got in these days. You are an artist—a genuine artist.'

'Perhaps. But I am going away.'

'Wrong, Emanuel—wrong. If you knew what was good for you there would be no more wanderings; you would settle down and work where the money is. If you would work steadily I could multiply your price by four in as many months. Think of it. Think of it. You are no longer young, Emanuel. The best years of your life are passing away. Very soon the skill and the eye will fail you. Think. A little money saved for your old age——'

'No! no! Money? I want no money. I must go away. I want to get back to the Desert. Here I am choked. But for two or

three persons whom I am loth to leave I should have gone before this.'

'Who are the two or three persons?' Mr. Aldebert Angelo sat on a carved oaken stool, while Emanuel stood before him, carved panel in hand, like a schoolboy before his master. 'I wouldn't mind laying a bet that your friends are next door to paupers. But go on, Emanuel, I like it.'

'One of them is the man whose secret you disclosed, to the undoing of his son'—'My nephew,' interposed Mr. Angelo, 'My nephew, the Viscount Selsey'—'The father is a wise man, because he understands the simple things. He knows that money and position have nothing to do with life. Strange that so simple a thing should be understood by so few. Our own Essenes; some of the Buddhists; some of the Christian monks; here and there a Spinoza—here and there a Mendelssohn.' Emanuel's voice dropped when he talked in this abstract and unpractical manner. 'He laid down his wealth and station, and went out to share the Common Lot.

He has been a sailor. Now he is a Preacher. He preaches through his paper. I am sorry to go away and to leave that man behind. When I return he may be dead.'

'Humph! There is one pauper for you—a fool of a pauper, who exchanged a coronet for rags. Well, Emanuel, who is the second man?'

'His nephew Harold. I travelled once with him. We travelled together up the valley of the Euphrates. He is a young man who receives and understands. Some day, perhaps, he too will lay down the burden of his money.'

'He's only got a thousand a year or so. That's not much to carry,' said the bric-à-brac dealer, conscious of a much heavier burden. 'Is there anybody else?'

'There is a girl.'—'Ah!' said Mr. Angelo. 'A girl named Francesca. Harold loves her, and will marry her in good time. I love the girl as well.'

'What is her other name?'

'I do not know. To me a person has but

one name. She belongs to the People by descent: to the Spanish Jews, like you.'

'Truly, like me. And so you like that girl? Very good. It was intended that you should like her. Well, it was not to talk about wood-carving that I asked you to call upon me this morning. Look here, Emanuel, you have never even asked my name. Did it not strike you as rather curious that I should suddenly take all this interest in you? Why did I commission you to carve in wood for me? I did not particularly want any wood-carving done—not that I mean to lose any money by you—and my brother did not want to take a lodger; he does not need to let lodgings, yet he sent you to his daughter. Why?'

'I do not know. I suppose he makes a little profit by taking me. I suppose you make a little profit by my wood-carving. It is the way of our People to make profit out of everything. What need to inquire?'

'Well, Emanuel, the truth is this: When you appeared, bringing that letter from Ham-

burg, I was at that moment talking to my brother about your wife.'

'That concerns me not. My wife is dead. I have no wife.'

'Oh, yes, you have! But listen. We were talking, I say, about her fortune. It was, you know, a most enormous fortune. Was—alas! We were saying that it was a thousand pities that such a spendid inheritance could not be kept in the hands of the family—your family, or your wife's family—for the good of the People—our own People.'

'Not my family. Whether her money is kept in her family concerns me not.'

'You are as proud as Lucifer. Your wife's family, then, is mine. My name—my brother's name—is Albu. We are second cousins of Isabel Albu, your wife. Now, when we saw you, the thought came into my head that you might perhaps be the means of keeping this fortune from falling into the hands of the Christians. I did not know how—perhaps by reconciling you to your wife; but indeed I did not know.'

'You could not reconcile me to my wife. You might bring my wife, submissive, to me. But I do not think you would succeed, unless she has changed indeed.'

'No.' Mr. Angelo laughed. 'There's not much submission in that quarter. Well, Emanuel, you see, everybody's got fond of you. Nelly—now Lady Selsey—and Clara, and that Francesca girl, they all swear that you are the best and the wisest man in the world. That's because you don't care for money. Girls, when they've got all that money can buy, never do care for money. It's a thousand pities, for their sakes, that you can't stay. Now—as for the fortune,—I do wonder now how you'll take this awful news, Emanuel. The vast great fortune—millions and millions!—it's gone—it's melted away—it's all stolen. A scoundrel banker who kept the scrip and received the *Rentes* has forged your wife's name, and stolen the money, and lost it on the Bourse.'

'Has she lost her fortune? It is late in life for her to learn the lesson—for some, a

rude lesson—that we are all better without money.'

'You are going back to the Desert, Emanuel, I think you said. You had better keep that kind of talk till you are in the Desert where there's no shops, and, I believe, no money to be made anyhow. To me it's sickening foolishness. Well—your wife has lost the whole of her money. All she's got left is a big house at a long lease: this she will try to let; she has got a pile of furniture, all good, and some very good; she has her jewels—fortunately she's fond of jewellery; she's got diamonds and rubies—oh! very good diamonds and rubies—I don't say they're not good; she has her books, and she has the things she calls pictures. She knows as much of pictures as one of your Arabs. There isn't a thing in the house worth a ten-pound note; not a single picture nor a piece of bric-à-brac, I give you my word, that I would so much as receive inside this house. I should be ashamed even to offer one of those things of hers to any of my friends. Why, Emanuel, you'd say

that I should feel it for the third and fourth generation for such a robbery. It would be worse, man—worse than any robbery, because they would say my eye was gone—my eye—my *flair*, the sixth sense of an art dealer. But the diamonds and things are good, I admit, and so is the furniture. I believe that if everything could be sold at no more than a reasonable loss, she would get about six thousand pounds—six thousand pounds—out of her fortune of millions—six thousand pounds and a few hundreds in the bank. Six thousand pounds—say 240*l.* a year, and that for a woman who has been spending ten thousand a year, and might have spent, had she chosen, sixty thousand a year.'

'It is a change for her. The possession of money gave her, she thought, the right to Authority. Now that right will disappear.'

'I tell you this, Emanuel, not because I expect that you will grieve over the loss, but because you are concerned in a way which perhaps you have forgotten. A man like you forgets everything that has money in it. If

it was only a wise saying about the vanity of money, you'd remember it. Well, it's this: When you married, about two-and-twenty years ago, you had no money.'

'None. I lived by writing papers and by giving lectures on chemistry. I had no money then, or before, or since—I have never had any money. I thank God for it.'

'You forget. On the day of your marriage there was placed in your hands a document called a Settlement. Do you remember the Settlement?'

'No; I remember nothing about any Settlement.'

'This. Your bride, being then of age and capable of doing this, settled upon you for life an income of fifty thousand francs—or 2,000*l.* sterling. It was her gift, and a very princely gift, too, to her husband. The money was ordered to be paid to your account at a London bank.'

'Stop!' cried Emanuel, quickly. 'I have never had any money at all from my wife, not one farthing.'

'Don't fly out. I am going to tell you. A month after the wedding, you separated from your wife. You saw your wife once more, a year after. You separated from her again. That money has ever since been paid to your account every quarter—500*l.* every quarter—until the last quarter-day, when it ceased, because the fortune was all gone. Do you begin to understand?'

'I think I do.'

'Twenty years. Two thousand pounds a year—nothing touched. You have now lying to your credit forty thousand pounds. Not less than forty thousand pounds. You are a rich man, Emanuel—you who have just been profanely thanking the God of Israel that He has given you no money. You are a rich man.'

Emanuel put on his hat. 'I shall go,' he said. 'I shall go away before I intended. Mind! I will never touch this money—I will not have it. Let her have it back. Take money of the woman who refused to obey her

husband? Never! Let her have it back.' He turned to go.

'Stop, stop! my good friend,' cried Aldebert. 'Do you mean it? Do you really mean it?'

'What else can I mean?'

'Well, then, Emanuel, if you really mean that you are going to give back all this money to your wife, it isn't enough to say so and to go off. If you do that, she will never be able to get it, nor will you be able to part with it. Will you trust me to arrange it for you? From what I know of your wife, she is quite as capable of refusing to take your money as you are of taking hers.'

'Arrange it as you will. She is your cousin.'

'Very good. I thought you would say this. I have prepared a deed for you to sign. You will hand over the whole of this money to me in trust—in trust, mind—the interest upon it, amounting to about twelve hundred pounds, to be paid to Isabel Elveda, your

wife, during her lifetime, and to her heirs after her death. Will that suit your views?'

'I have no views.'

'Then here is the deed ready for your signature. As you despise money, you can't do better than punish your rebellious wife by giving her all you have.'

Emanuel signed without even reading the paper. The assistant, or clerk, witnessed.

'Thank you. And now, Emanuel, you can get off for the Desert as soon as you like, though I believe that Clara wants a word or two with you first. And you really do find yourself more comfortable in a country where there's no money and no means of making any? Wonderful! If it wasn't for your face and your ways, Emanuel, I couldn't believe that you belong to the People. About your wife again. I shall not tell her, unless I am obliged to, that the money comes from you. I shall say it is saved from the wreck.'

'As you please. I am not concerned about the money at all.'

'Some men would like the credit of giving up such a lot. You don't seem even to care whether she knows that you have done it or not.'

'There is no credit in it at all.'

'Emanuel, you are going away—for how long you don't know. It is twenty one years since you saw your wife. Perhaps—I don't know—she doesn't look that way inclined, I must say—perhaps she may have softened. Perhaps you may never again have the chance. See her once more. If she will consent to see you, call upon her. Let me arrange this as well for you.'

Emanuel received the suggestion in silence.

Then he began to walk up and down the shop, showing unphilosophical signs of mental agitation.

'Why should I see her?' he asked presently. 'What good would it do for me to see her?'

'She may tell you something unexpected,' Mr. Angelo replied, thinking of the daughter.

'Come, Emanuel, I am sure you will hear something unexpected.'

'Why should I not see her?' he asked, disregarding the chance of the Unexpected, which, as we know, always does happen, whether we regard it or not.

'Why not?' echoed Aldebert.

'The time has gone by when the thought of her beauty moved me till I became faint and sick. I no longer lie awake with a yearning after my lost wife. She could not move me now. Yet—no, the old passion is dead. I will see her if she likes. Leave it with her. Tell her from me that I am unchanged, but that I feel no bitterness towards her. If she would like to see me once more before I go away—I think it may be the last chance—for even in the Desert, where I shall mostly dwell, many accidents may happen. I will not ask to see her. But if she wishes—if she consents——'

His face showed that the time of emotion was not gone by. He remembered the past.

He turned and left the house without another word.

'A Dreamer!' Mr. Aldebert Angelo looked after him. 'A Dreamer of foolish Dreams! And yet one likes it. There's a novelty in meeting with a man who doesn't want money.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

SOMETHING SAVED

Mr. Angelo took the necessary steps without delay, transferred the accumulations to his own account, and gave instructions to his broker for the investment in his own name as trustee. That business accomplished, he made his way to Cromwell Road, and called upon his cousin.

She received him in her study, where she was sitting, as usual, over her papers. But her pen in those days was idle, and her thoughts were elsewhere. We must forgive a little temporary distraction to a woman who has lost such an amazing quantity of money.

'You come to bring me more bad news, cousin?' she said, giving him her hand. 'I received your letter from Paris.' Her manner

was unchanged, but her face was pale and set. The two secretaries had disappeared. And already the pile of letters was greatly diminished, because the news, imperfect and garbled, had been published in the Paris papers first, and then in all the London papers. A millionaire does not become a pauper without the world's comment.

'Things looked very bad when I wrote that letter. I left your affairs in trustworthy hands when I could do no more, and I came back. Since then we have not been quite idle, and I have come to tell you the result.'

'Then I am a pauper?'

'No. A little to the right side of pauperdom. First,' he took out his note-book—'I shall engage your attention for a quarter of an hour, I am afraid.'

'What is a quarter of an hour to give to a man who rescues me from destitution? Pray sit down, cousin, and go on.'

'First, then. You are aware that by your marriage settlement an income of 2,000*l.* a year was settled on your husband for life?'

'I believe so. You might, perhaps, inform the people concerned that there is no more money to pay that with.'

'I have done so. As for the accumulations——'

'He has saved something out of his income? When last I heard about the matter, he had not drawn any of it for years. I am not concerned with his accumulations.'

'He has never touched any of the money. It has all accumulated. His heiress would be his daughter.'

Madame Elveda frowned.

'Francesca may have the money, then,' she said jealously. 'I had hoped that my child would owe everything to me. But we do not know certainly whether he is dead or not. To be sure he must be dead long, long ago.'

Mr. Angelo leaned forward, saying, in a stage whisper,

'Cousin, your husband is not dead. I have seen him. I have conversed with him.'

'Not dead? Then why—but it matters nothing to me. If he is living let him take his accumulations. What has he done all these years that I have heard nothing about him?'

'You have been separated from your People. That is the reason. He has been wandering about the world, staying nowhere long. In the towns he works at wood-carving for his livelihood, and stays always among the People.'

'I desire to hear nothing more about my husband. I should like to forget him if I could. I have nearly succeeded, and now you come to reopen a closed chapter——'

'Forgive me. It is best that you should know. Besides—but I will first speak of other business. I left your affairs, I said, in good and trustworthy hands. They seemed, at first, in a deplorable condition indeed. I have now, however, ascertained that out of the wreck will be saved or recovered a sum of forty thousand pounds——'

'Forty thousand pounds! It does not

seem much out of two millions and a half. But I am thankful for anything.'

'It is not much out of so much. Still a sum of forty thousand pounds would be called by most people a pretty little fortune. Twenty years ago I should have smiled incredulously had anyone told me that I should, at any time, be worth forty thousand pounds. In fact, you will still be comfortably off, only without the feeling of great power which your lifelong possession of wealth unbounded must have given you. It must be,' he continued, shaking his head and growing poetical over a misfortune which engaged his deepest sympathies, 'like laying down the crown and sceptre. What a Queen! To possess those millions!—it was enormous. It was almost beyond the wildest ambition. Yes, few Queens have so much power as you with your millions! If you only knew the admiration with which I first approached you on that occasion, when I dared to call you cousin—the admiration, the pride, the envy! As for us whom the world calls fortunate, we creep along, we creep

slowly along. If we die worth a quarter of a million, men will call us happy. But you—you with millions—always growing, and growing at the rate of seventy thousand a year at least, because you *couldn't* spend it. Oh, it is dreadful—it maddens a man—only to think of such a loss! Why, your daughter in thirty years' time would have been worth five millions at least; and in fifty years' time ten millions, and if it could be kept together for a hundred years your grandchildren would have a lump fortune of fifty millions—fifty millions—fifty millions sterling!!! Oh! I cannot get it out of my head. I think of it perpetually. Day and night I cannot get it out of my head. What a misfortune! Millions, and all gone! And all gone! Cousin, I wonder—I really wonder—at your fortitude. Some women would have broken down utterly under such a blow; I myself under such a misfortune should have gone mad, or I should have taken to my bed and died. But you—you are of granite—you shed no tears—you do not rail at fortune—you sit calmly as if it

were nothing worse than the smash of a favourite cup. Such fortitude is beyond me.'

'I am not quite so brave as you imagine. But I try not to think too much of the loss. It relieves me inexpressibly, for instance, to learn that you have saved so much for me. And I need not say, cousin, that I am deeply grateful, and that I regret very much the cold reception which I gave to your brother and to you.'

'That is nothing—nothing. Blood is thicker than water, cousin Isabel. It has been a happiness to be of use to you. Besides, we are proud of you apart from your fortune. You are a leader, whether we like your Cause or not. You are a great lady—always a great lady, whether you have lost your fortune or not. I am what I am—a dealer —a rich dealer. I know a lady when I see one. You can't make a lady by giving her money. She has got to be a lady from the beginning. There's a difference, for instance, between my daughter and yours. They both learn the same things; but they began dif-

ferently, and they think differently. Clara grew up in the rooms over the shop. Enough! You understand me, cousin Isabel. We do not now, any more than we did before you lost your money, wish to intrude upon you. But if I can be of any assistance at all to you, command me.'

Madame Elveda held out her hand. 'You are a good man, cousin.' The tears appeared in her eyes. 'You, and my daughter together, almost make me regret that I came out from the People and drove away my husband. But, if it were all to come over again'—she set her face hard again—'I would do it all over again. Remember that. I would do it again.'

'That,' said Mr. Angelo, 'is none of my business. Perhaps, if Emanuel Elveda had gone on living at home, the money would have been lost just the same. He would have dropped it into the ocean, I dare say, on principle, and then you'd be tramping about the world with him. A dreamer, a dreamer! But we like to have a dreamer

among us sometimes; it can't be said, when Emanuel is about, that we all think of nothing but money. Now, let me go on. You want to let this house. I have found you a tenant.'

'So soon?'

'So soon. Yes. Things have happened opportunely. The tenant I propose to you is the young Viscount Selsey—my nephew by marriage.' Mr. Angelo tried his best not to show pride in the connection; but the thing was too strong for him; he swelled visibly as he spoke. 'My nephew by marriage,' he repeated. 'Son of the Earl of Hayling, who was lost and is found. Lord Selsey married my niece, Preciada Albu, daughter of my brother, who came here with me—Sydney Bernard, you know—came with me and said rude things. They are to be allowed five thousand a year, with a certain sum paid to their account for starting. As their adviser, I will take this house for them, and buy all the contents as they stand—furniture, books, plate, bric-à-brac—but'—he looked round

and shuddered—'not the pictures. I cannot conscientiously buy the pictures for them.'

'What should I do with the pictures?'

'Stack them carefully out in the back garden, and then put a lucifer match to the lowest,' replied the dealer. 'That is the kindest thing you can do to the pictures. Believe me, I would buy them for this young couple if I could. Your books may be the greatest rubbish in the world. I buy them all the same. But not the pictures. And, of course, whatever you like to keep——'

'They would take everything in the house as it stands?' Madame Elveda leaned her head upon her hand. 'That seems simple. As for me, I never have any sentiment about furniture and such things. I shall be able to get more fitting furniture for narrower quarters. Nothing here seems to belong to me, any more than if I was in an hotel. I suppose if one had grown up in a house, with friends and cousins——' Here she stopped. 'When one buys everything one wants, and as fast as one wants it, there is no sentiment

possible about personal possessions. That is, I suppose, one disadvantage about being rich. One cares nothing at all about possessions and belongings.'

'Ah! when a man's got to calculate before he buys, he values things. I sometimes think,' Aldebert continued, with a touch of sentiment, 'that it must be a happier time when one is getting rich—growing bigger and stronger—than when one is rich, and all the work is over. For me, I shall never stop working. Well, not to worry you with details, which you can have later, you may reckon on about sixteen or seventeen hundred pounds a year. If you will permit me, I will act as your agent, invest the money for you, and pay your dividends into the bank for you.'

'I shall be infinitely obliged to you, if you will do so much for me, cousin.'

'It is not great wealth, but it is enough. You will continue to live much as you have been living, but in smaller quarters. However rich one is, it is not possible to eat and

drink more than a certain quantity. I've sometimes thought it a hardship, but I don't know. And that, cousin, is all I have to report.' Mr. Angelo put up his notes, and took off his pince-nez.

'Before you go, cousin,' said Madame Elveda, 'I must try to express my gratitude for all that you have done for me. You were right when you told me that, of all my friends, I should not find one in time of trouble who could help me. There is only one, I believe, who would go out of his way to help me. And that man knows nothing at all about business. A woman who cuts herself off from her own people and her early friends, and those who should advise her, becomes necessarily more or less a lonely woman. I have been so much occupied with my work, and I have so many acquaintances, that I have only felt the isolation of my life during the last few days, when it seemed as if I might actually become a friendless pauper. But you, whom I hardly treated with common civility, you

came most generously to my assistance. How shall I thank you?'

'No thanks are needed, cousin. You are still, though you cast us off, belonging to us. We of the People stand by each other. We must. It is the one lesson that we have learned during all the years of persecution. We must.'

He rose, pushing back his chair. 'You are good enough to say that you are pleased with my small services. May I ask a favour —I do not say in return—but a favour?'

'Surely, my cousin. What can I do?'

'You have been so kind as to admit my daughter to your house. This time I ask a favour for my niece. She is, you know, Lady Selsey, and it's a tremendous honour to have such a connection. But Lord Selsey is young and inexperienced: he was brought up in ignorance of his rank; he knows nothing of society; they are to come here and to live quietly till they do know something. The only lady that Nelly—that's my niece, we call her Nelly though her name is Preciada:

you know our ways—the only lady that Nelly knows is her cousin, my daughter Clara, and your daughter. When they have been settled a bit and the boy has learned a little —he'll never learn much—how a gentleman ought to look and talk, if you would call upon my niece it would be a kindness and a favour.'

'If that is all—with the greatest pleasure ; but remember, I am quite a poor woman now, and, therefore, powerless.'

'Don't tell 'em how much you've lost. Don't tell 'em how much you've kept. The papers don't know : the paragraphs showed that. Then you'll keep some of your power. Money is power, isn't it?'

Then he put up his note-book and took his hat.

'I must say one word about your husband. I know you do not want to hear about him, yet it is only for a moment. After that, if you please, you shall never hear another word from me about him.'

'On that condition, then. Besides, I can

refuse you nothing, after what you have done for me.'

'You never quarrelled—of course not. People like you don't quarrel. You separated. But you cannot fail to respect this dreamer of dreams.'

'There is no man in the world whom I respect so much as Emanuel Elveda.'

'He is going away again immediately. He is one of those who cannot stay in the same place long. He must wander. He will not make any money: he despises money; he sells his carving for anything that offers. Says that it hurts him little to be robbed, but that it hurts the robber to the third and fourth generation—that's the dreamy way he talks, as if the robber would feel it. Most of all he likes wandering in the Desert with the Arabs. There he need do no work, and can dream away the days.'

'Well?'

'See him once more, before he goes. It may be the last chance of meeting before he dies.'

Madame Elveda received the proposition in the same way as Emanuel. That is to say, she made no reply for a while.

'Did he himself propose this meeting?' she asked presently.

'No; I proposed it. The proposal agitated him. But he consented to my mentioning the thing. He leaves it entirely in your hands.'

'I am twenty years older than when last we parted,' she said sadly. 'Had you asked me twenty years ago, the mere chance of seeing him again would have filled me with rapture and with fear. I should have feared lest I should give way to him. I should have rejoiced at the chance of giving way to him. Now the old passion and the old emotions are gone. Yes; they are dead in me. I can only see in my husband the Man who would subdue the Woman. Let him come. Tell Emanuel from me that I should like to see him and to talk to him—if he wishes—once more before he goes.'

'Clara,' said her father that evening,

'I've done a good stroke for your friend and cousin Francesca this day. I've got forty thousand pounds for her, or for her mother —and it's in my hands, not to be wasted and thrown away. That's a good thing done. And I've made Emanuel and Madame promise to meet each other. They are both as proud as the Devil, and neither will give way. Still—well—we've done what we can. Now, look here, Clara. Emanuel is going away, and if you don't hurry up he'll go away without finding out that he's got a daughter.'

'Oh! But he must not! he must not!'

'Now you see the result of your precious plan. You, who thought yourself so clever! What I wanted was to bring them together—I said, at a little dinner in a private room. To be sure, Emanuel would just as soon be set down to a plate of whelks as to a dish of turtle soup, but I suppose one can't order whelks at the Café Royal. I should have said, when I'd got them together, comfortable, "Francesca," I would have said, "here's your Pa—long-lost and supposed to be dead." Not

you—that's too simple for you. They must get to know each other, then they'd get to love each other. Then they'd suddenly find out the truth. You made quite a little play about it. "What! Your name is Elveda? Elveda? Heavens! So is mine!" Very pretty it was. Only the little play hasn't come off.'

'Who could possibly guess,' asked the unsuccessful dramatist, 'that two people would be together all this time and actually not be curious enough to know each other's name?'

'What will you do next, then?'

'Well, father, if my plan won't do, I must try yours.'

CHAPTER XXXV

LOVE DEAD AND BURIED

Poets have spoken of the regrets, the longings, the yearnings provoked by seeing after long years places, things, and persons once familiar and dear. We all revisit Yarrow when we grow old. Every old man lives in a burial ground growing every year larger and larger, filled with dead thoughts and dead friends. The monuments stand around sacred to their memories: lying monuments some, because their memories are not sacred, and one would fain forget them if that were possible. To stand before such a tomb and to remember what that once was which is now buried there is surely the most mournful thing that life has to give. Better close one's eyes to the monuments and pass on, forgetting that they stand

around. Before such a tomb Emanuel and his wife were to stand. The thing within it was dead—they had killed it. They were going to revive the memory of the dead and then to part again—perhaps to see each other no more till, in another world, the relation of woman to man would be established once for all, without any possible chance of misunderstanding.

'Is it well with the Master?'

Melkah rose from her corner on the stairs where she sat half the day, a bundle of shawls and wraps. She looked up when Emanuel entered the hall; she rose and stood with some difficulty, for her joints were rusty with age. She threw back the shawl that covered her head and made a veil.

'I knew you would come back once more before you died.'

Emanuel started. 'Everything is the same—not the same house, I suppose, but like it. The hall, and the stairs, and Melkah —Melkah. You must be very old, Melkah.'

'I am ninety and more. Sometimes I think I am forgotten. Who should remember a silly old woman like me? You will find Madame upstairs. She is waiting for you—just as she waited for you twenty years ago. Be gentle with her, Master.'

Emanuel passed up the stairs. Melkah sank back into her corner and covered her head again, and so sat huddled up.

Emanuel opened the door of the drawing-room. Yes. It was exactly as if the twenty years of separation had disappeared. It was not the same room, but it looked the same. Moreover, to his eyes, ignorant of Æsthetic, the furniture appeared to be the same. And at the end of the room his wife sat waiting for him as she had waited for him twenty years ago. As she was dressed then, so she was dressed now, in the stately crimson velvet that she loved, with jewels round her neck and arms. As she walked down the room to meet him then, so she walked down the room to meet him now. As she stopped in the middle of the room then, so she stopped now. She

gave him her hand, but he gently refused it. 'We are either husband and wife,' he said, 'or we are strangers who have a common sorrow.'

'If we have a common sorrow we are not strangers. But—as you will. Let us talk as strangers if you please, or, rather, as old acquaintances.'

'Nay. Let us talk as the dead talk who have a common past to remember. We have a common past, Isabel.'

He took a chair, as he had done twenty years before, and placed it for her. Then he placed another for himself. They sat facing opposite ways, but side by side, just as they had done twenty years before.

'I heard that you were in London,' the dead wife began, 'from one Aldebert Angelo, who is, as perhaps you know, a second or third cousin of mine. I thought that you must be dead, because I heard nothing about your work, and I thought you would do great things. It appears that you have abandoned science. Mr. Angelo tells me that you are

poor—that you work with your hands. Is that necessary, Emanuel?'

'A man must live,' the dead husband replied. 'I do as much work as is required to keep me. I wander about the face of the earth. Since we parted, Isabel, I have wandered on foot all round the Mediterranean. Once I saw you—it was in a street of Tunis. You were in a shop, buying things. I have never ceased to think of you—there was a time when I was drawn as by ropes towards you. I was tempted, for your sake, to trample on the Law and to make myself the most abject of men—one who sells his birthright of pre-eminence for a woman's kiss. Therefore I hastened to get as far from you as I could. I can now look back to the death of my short-lived wife with the tender memory of her beauty and her virtue and her sweetness. Her rebellion I have forgotten. It is but a month that I have to remember, but that short month has filled all my life.'

'As for me, Emanuel, when you died I suffered—I may now confess—more pain than

I thought I could feel for any man. There was not a day for months afterwards, when, if you had suddenly presented yourself, I should not have been ready to fall at your feet and offer obedience and submission.' In her face, in her eyes, had he looked there, was again the same look of submission. 'Fortunately,' she went on, more coldly, 'you did not appear. You are, I need hardly ask, still of the same mind as regards the position of women?'

'I remain still of the same mind, Isabel—that is to say, I remain in harmony with the Laws of God—and the Laws of Nature, which are the Laws of God. You are still, perhaps, a rebel against both.'

'If you please; call it what you like. For twenty years I have striven to uphold the equality of woman. Oh! I know all that you would say. I have against me the united forces of religion, tradition, prejudice, and brutality. If such men as Emanuel Elveda will not allow my contention, what am I to expect of the ignorant mass? I have suc-

ceeded, however, so far that the world has learned the actual condition of women in Europe, at least. I have shown what the enforced submission of women has led to, over this civilised continent. And I have gathered round me a band of women devoted to the cause of their own enfranchisement.'

'Was this all you had to say to me, Isabel? For we waste the time. I know what you have done. I have seen your book translated into German, French, Spanish, Italian, and Russian. It is everywhere—and though I never read papers, I have heard your name and your work discussed on steamers and in railway carriages. Therefore I said to myself, "Isabel remains rebellious."'

'I wanted to see you, Emanuel, partly out of curiosity and partly because I had something to tell you. Out of curiosity, because I wished to see the face that could once move me so deeply. It is changed, Emanuel. Some of the sunshine has gone out of your face: I think your eyes could no longer flash suddenly with hope as they used to do

when you had a dream more brilliant than usual. Oh, Emanuel! you were a dreamer of Dreams and a seer of Visions. There was never such a man as yourself: Jacob's Ladder was always before your eyes with angels running up to Heaven. You were always yourself half-way up that ladder; with your science you would create a new world for mankind, with your preaching you would create a new man for the new world. When you left me, Emanuel, it was as if the colour and the sunshine were taken out of life. You had ideas as well as dreams. Pity that your ideas and your dreams should be all thrown away.'

'Perhaps they are not all thrown away. There are other ways of preserving thought besides the writing of books—better ways, some of them. Perhaps, too, a man may do better for the world if he leaves it his still imperfect thoughts unexpressed. He may be permitted to take them into his next existence: most likely they are but the reflection of passing events. What we call thoughts are

generally nothing but a bald translation into words of things that we have seen.'

'Dreamer still! As for me, I live for this world. What the next may be, I neither know nor will I guess. Well, Emanuel, we have met again. Perhaps it was not wise. Yet there has been a past for both of us. I, for one, was curious to learn if I could look on your face and hear your voice without being stirred in the old way. I am satisfied on that point. We are dead to each other—or to ourselves. Yet it is pleasant to see your face again, Emanuel. It recalls the past, or some of it, and it brings no bitterness—even—now—no regrets. I wonder that there should have been a time when I could not look upon your face without a yearning of the heart.'

'I do not wonder—thinking of the past. But you killed the very instinct of love when you rebelled against the Law. Still, you have a memory, Isabel. It should have kept you out of many extravagances which those women commit who know not love. Your curiosity is satisfied,' he added, with the least

touch of annoyance—no one, not even a Philosopher, likes being the subject of curiosity. 'Let us now go on to what you wished to say.'

'When we were married, Emanuel, I was rich.'

'So I understood.'

'I am rich no longer. All my money has been stolen and dissipated. I have now only a few thousands left of all my great inheritance.'

Emanuel bowed his head—a gesture which may mean anything you please, but it always means that the speaker is followed and understood, so far.

'The settlement that was made upon you at our marriage—it was an annuity—can no longer be paid, Emanuel.'

'I know nothing,' he said coldly, 'about any settlement.'

'Therefore, I propose, if you will consent, to divide what has been saved out of the wreck—it will be something over forty thousand pounds—into two portions, of which

you shall take one half, and leave me the other half.'

'What?' he started into life. 'Take your money from you? Divide with you? Are you mad? Can you think for a moment that I could do this thing? What do I know about your settlement? I have never taken anything from you when you were rich—do you imagine that I am going to begin when you have lost your fortune?'

She was silent for a moment. Then she replied, 'You shame me now as always, Emanuel. I could not take money from you. Forgive me.'

'You have lost your fortune, Isabel. I am not sorry. Great fortunes are the curse of civilisation. The thing that our People desire perpetually corrupts us while we desire it, corrupts us while we work for it, corrupts our children when we leave it to them. So the Lord makes scourges for us out of our desires—Israel is cursed with the lust of gold. Why, but for your riches you would have shared the Common Lot.' Madame Elveda

started; her daughter had used those words. 'You would have become a wife and a mother contented with the Eternal Laws of Nature. What have you become?—a Rebel; one who wages a vain and feeble war against the Order of Heaven. You are like a child shaking its fist at the moon. You are like the woman in the Rabbinical story, the nursery story, that first Rebel among women—Lilith. Your desire has been granted to you, with the consequences which you did not expect. You have had a lonely, a friendless, and a loveless life. Now that your money is gone it will become more lonely, more friendless, and more loveless. Oh! I use not threatening words. These things are natural consequences. You have trampled on the Law. As the wineglass which was broken at our wedding, so shall your life be broken, scattered, and lost. But the Law remains. And the Woman shall obey the Man.'

'I will not dispute with you, Emanuel. Say on.'

'You have left your People and your Faith. Yet the Lord our God is one God.'

'Oh, Emanuel! I could laugh at you, but the thing is too serious. I could be angry with you, but still it is too serious.'

'My dead wife'—he looked into her face with a touch of the old tenderness—'for the sake of that short month, every hour of which lives in my memory, I cannot choose but speak the truth. Nevertheless, I have no longer the right even to speak in your presence of what I think. You are still beautiful, Isabel, but your face is hard. It should be the face of a woman whose days have been bathed with the sunshine of love. But it is hard. It is the face of a woman who has been fighting for twenty years.'

'And yours, Emanuel, is the face of a dreamer still. Your eyes are full of dreams. Love has no place in your thoughts. Farewell, dead husband. The dead neither kiss nor greet each other, nor take each other by the hand. For them there is nothing but the past. Farewell.'

They gazed in each other's faces for a while. Then Emanuel turned and walked slowly down the room.

When, some months later, Emanuel sat among the tents of certain Arab friends, that last farewell arose again in his mind. He saw his dead wife's eyes, and as he gazed into them their hard look faded, and there came again the long-lost eyes of love. And so that memory will remain with him to the end.

As he walked down the room, his wife looked after him, just as she had done twenty years before. The rounding of his shoulders, the stoop of his neck, touched her with a sense of pity. Emanuel, she thought, was growing old. As for the words of warning, they fell upon her like seed upon a hard rock. She heard them, but heeded them not.

He passed out and closed the door. She hesitated, then she walked down the room,

It was all exactly like the last talk, twenty years ago. She opened the door, and stepped out upon the landing. Below she watched her husband walking across the broad hall. He opened the door and went out, shutting it behind him. All exactly like that parting of twenty years ago. But this time it was the last parting of dead husband and dead wife.

She saw Melkah standing with her shawl thrown back looking out after this strange visitor.

'Melkah!' she cried, 'Melkah! Did you see him? Last time he came he prophesied a loveless life, while the child was calling from the cradle; again he prophesies a loveless life, when the child has grown up.'

'But she has left the cradle—she has left the nest, she has flown away. Francesca is gone! You must live without her. I told you—I told you! Get her a husband, I said. She was falling into fancies. But you would not. You have lost her. The child is gone.'

'Melkah, you are a silly old woman!

Why should Francesca be gone? How should I lose her? She will come back changed, because she will have lost her fancies. She will come back to be my lieutenant and my successor. Melkah, he is more obstinate than ever. His face—there was a time when I was silly over that face—is nobler than before. He is as full of dreams; he is as unpractical, and he is as obstinate as ever. I am glad to have seen the man once more, Melkah. It makes me proud to think that such a man loved me; yet I love him no longer. If I, who was loved by Emanuel Elveda, can stand up for the equality of women, how much more should those unhappy women fight for it who are mated with lower men?'

'The Woman must obey the Man,' said the old woman of Damascus—who could never be converted.

CHAPTER XXXVI

CHILDLESS

'LONELY—Loveless—Friendless!'

Madame Elveda sat alone. She had been quite alone for some days. It was the month of August, when everybody is out of town and work has come to an end—even work for the emancipation of women. There were no letters and no callers, and her fortune was gone. She was going to exchange her big house for a flat, and it seemed as if her friends had all gone too.

'Lonely—Loveless—Friendless!'

When one is strong and rich and busy, and surrounded by troops of acquaintances, the loneliness of life is not felt: when the work and the friends and the wealth vanish, the loneliness of life begins to be felt. It

wraps a man round as with a mist. One who walks in a thick fog understands the loneliness of life. Madame Elveda sat alone in the great house. She was alone all day and all the evening: the silence of the house weighed upon her, and the words of her husband began to ring in her ears like a bell that tolls for a parting soul.

'Lonely—Loveless—Friendless!'

'Melkah,' she said, 'why should Francesca change? What did you mean when you said that Francesca would change?'

'She is gone to live among women who love. Those who love obey their husbands. You teach her one thing and she sees another. Francesca is like her father.'

'Her father would command, not obey.'

Melkah shook her head. She knew what she meant.

Lo! one evening while she pondered these things, her daughter returned.

She stood before her mother, who looked in her face curiously and anxiously. Yes, the girl was changed. Her face was changed—

it was filled with new thoughts: it was eager, the face of a girl who is occupied and busy with many things.

Her mother sighed and turned away. She recognised by maternal intuition that her daughter was changed—and she knew in what direction.

'You look troubled, mother. Has anything happened?'

'Yes, my dear, a great deal has happened. A most important change has fallen upon me.'

'Mother!' Francesca cried eagerly, 'not a change in your opinions?'

'Not in my opinions, Francesca,' she replied coldly. 'They remain the same. The change, however, will greatly reduce my power of making them effective. You will understand directly that if you could have been a help to me in the past, when I had every kind of assistance that wealth could procure, you can be ten times as useful to me now.'

'When you *had*? But, my dear mother, have you not still—has any misfortune——?'

'What has happened is this: A month ago I was the possessor, I supposed, and you were the heiress, of a great fortune. I inherited a fortune of millions. It was invested chiefly in French stocks and securities. We never spent—we could not if we tried spend—a fifth part of our income. The rest accumulated, as I thought. About sixty thousand pounds of savings were invested every year. I kept a very careless account, because I had an agent in whom I entirely trusted. Still, I knew what was done with the money, and I kept in my own hands the power of selling out or changing investments. Nothing could be done without my signature. This gave me perfect confidence. Now, by these accumulations, my original fortune ought to have been increased, during the last twenty years, by another million. You should therefore be the heiress, if you succeeded to-day, of two millions and a half—that is to say, about a hundred thousand pounds a year. That is to say, again, I was probably the richest private woman in the

world, and you were certainly the greatest heiress.'

'Oh!' Francesca clasped her hands. 'We have actually lost our fortune? Lost our fortune? Oh! It is Providential! I was going to tell you, mother, that I wanted to give up my fortune—or my succession—and to join the people who have no money at all.'

'How would you live?' Her mother's voice showed no sympathy with this proposition.

'I should carry on Nelly's music-teaching. Oh! I should do very well.'

'Why do you wish to give up your fortune? With money, child, you can move the world. Without it, you can do nothing.'

Francesca shook her head. 'The only real power that one woman, or one man, can have over others is by example and teaching. One woman who lives the better life may shame a hundred who live the lower, but for her.'

'You talk like—your father, child. He

was a dreamer. But of dreams there comes no good.'

'Well—but if the fortune is all gone we needn't dream any longer. We can act. Why, it was only the other day, that Mr. Hayling—Lord Hayling properly—prayed solemnly that all my riches might be taken from me. It is like an answer to prayer. We have no money. Oh! a month ago I should have felt like the *Cigale* in winter. No money! the poor, shivering, naked *Cigale*! And now I am like the pilgrim who dropped his burden, and went on his way rejoicing and lighthearted.'

'You rejoice, Francesca? You rejoice that I have lost my fortune, and with it my position and my power? What does this mean?'

'Oh, mother! if your position and your power depend only on your fortune, what are they? No, your power will remain, if it is worth keeping. What would you have been had there never been any fortune at all?'

'This is not a time for speculation. Let

me go on. I heard of this reverse first about three weeks ago. Had I known that you would rejoice in poverty I would have told you at once; but I feared to distress you. I wanted you to go on working out the problem on which you were engaged undisturbed. But part of the thing has now got into the papers. I receive letters asking if the report is true, so I think it is best to tell you at once now that you appear delighted by my misfortunes.'

'No, mother; not your misfortunes. It was much best to tell me. Oh! It is gone? Is it really gone? Mother, I never understood, until this moment, what a horrid thing that money has been to us all along. Men pray for money; they dream of money—much money. They can't have too much money—and see! it has made me what I have been—not a woman at all—an artificial creature—an unreal creature, dressed up like a woman, talking rubbish about art and—and—mother, I cannot say it.'

'If, Francesca, you were able to help me

before,' her mother continued, pursuing her own thoughts, 'you are able to help me ten times as much now. We shall live in a flat, we must give up our dinners and our evenings, we must practise economy in small things—in fact, I clearly perceive that I can no longer be the Leader that I was. It remains for you to be a Leader of another kind. You will write; you will speak. Oh! you don't know, child, your own cleverness. You can do anything you please. You will carry on the Cause, Francesca.' For the first time in her life, the girl recognised in her mother's voice a touch of weakness—an appeal for help. Her heart fell within her, for, alas! she could be of no more use to her mother. She and the Cause were parted. 'I have the knowledge, Francesca. I used to have the wealth—now I have no more money—I, who was born to such immense treasure; but you, my dear, with the eloquence of beauty and of culture—you can use my knowledge as a well to draw from, and you will carry all before you.

Francesca, what do you mean? Why do you look at me like this?'

'There is a man, mother, living near us—over there—who was also born to a great fortune and to a great position. Long ago, more than twenty years ago, he gave up everything and went away to become a common working man. He became a sailor before the mast. He wanted to have the Common Lot: he married a girl of his adopted station—that must have been the hardest thing of all; he has enjoyed the Common Lot ever since. His wife has become a drunkard: his son is a shallow-brained fool; he has forwarded few—if any—of the things he preaches. Some would say that his life has been a failure. But he does not think so. He has had the Common Lot: he would not change if it were to do all over again. Suffering and hard work and disappointment—but to share the Common Lot, he says, is the best that can happen to a man.'

'What is this man to us, Francesca?'

'There is another man over there'—again Francesca pointed in an easterly direction—'who gave up his friends and his career twenty years ago in order to keep his freedom. He wants no money, he will not try to make any—he despises wealth. So long as he is free to live his life in his own way he is happy. He walks about the world, he works with his hands. He is quite—quite—free. And he is quite—quite—happy; and wiser, fuller of dignity and self-respect than any other man that ever I knew.'

'Again, Francesca, what has this man to do with us?'

'It is the Common Lot, mother, that I have seen and learned. It is the freedom from wealth that I have learned to envy. Mother, how was it made, this great fortune of ours?'

'It was made—how does it concern you, child, to know how it was made? It was made by one man, and, at least, honestly.'

'All that immense fortune made by one man? And that honestly? Since I have

been away, mother, I have heard a good deal about money, and I have been thinking. Formerly I used to believe that our wealth arose from a long succession of noble ancestors—Moors; now I know that this could not be. How was our fortune made, mother?'

'My grandfather made it, Francesca. He made it by contracts for provisions for the British Army in the Peninsular War. Now you know as much as I know. You may learn, at the same time, though the knowledge will not make you any the happier—knowledge never does, I think—that he was a self-made man, and began with nothing. There is nothing noble about your ancestors at all, at least on my side. On your father's side—yes. They were, before the Revolution, nobles of Spain, who laid down their titles when they had no further reason for concealing their faith.'

'He was a contractor, this rich great-grandfather. So our fortune was built upon bacon and flour. I am glad, at least, that it

was not made by sweating work-girls. Now, we have lost it—well—we have lost it. Can you regret it, mother?'

'Regret it? Are you mad, child? Do I regret power, authority, respect, consideration?'

'Yes, yes; but without the money you will have just as much consideration and respect. Your work remains, you have written the only great book on the present condition of women. You are an authority on that subject, whatever happens. I suppose you could have written that book just as well without so much money.'

'You know nothing, Francesca.'

'I know very little, it is true. But I have learned something. You should have kept me with you in this Harem. But you let me out, and I have learned many things. Mother, why did you let me believe that we were Moors?'

'There was a reason, my dear. I wanted so to separate myself from my own People that you should never know that you be-

longed to them. It was for your sake, Francesca. I wanted you to start without the superstition and the prejudices of the Jews. I would have you free.'

'Yes, I was free. But if freedom means seclusion from the world—— Oh! mother, believe me, I am not reproaching you, I understand why you did it. But I have learned the truth, and I rejoice—yes—rejoice. I am one of that great and immortal race, who have had so wonderful a past, and are going to have so wonderful a future.'

'Strange!' said her mother, 'and I have taken so much trouble to prevent you knowing the truth. Well, child, you are a Jewess. Your great-grandfather, who made all the money, was born in the Ghetto of Venice, but he was of a Spanish family. On your father's side you are still more Spanish, because for many generations the Elvedas were a noble Spanish family, secretly practising their ancient faith. And so you rejoice that you are a Jewess? Wonderful! By their Law the woman obeys the man and

is subject to him. And you rejoice that you are a Jewess!'

'Yes, I rejoice. And oh! the money is all gone, and I am free to work and to live as the others work and live. And I shall no longer sit at a hotel window and watch the Passing Show.'

'You will desert me, Francesca? Oh! child'—the mother's eyes filled with tears—'you will desert the Cause, and your mother who has been the leader of the Cause?'

'I must, mother, I must. I think that you and your friends are wrong from the very beginning. You say that woman is man's equal. No, no, no. Nature made him stronger, larger of brain and larger of heart. He does things which woman cannot do. Woman is below man. My new teacher says it is the Law of God—"'He shall rule over thee.'" My little study in comparative religions did not include, so far as I went, a study of that Law, but there is the Law of Nature. Why, everywhere it cries aloud that the man is greater than the woman! You

repudiate the submission of the woman over the man she loves. Why, all over the world, everywhere, in every country and in every age, the women cheerfully and happily yield submission and obedience to the men they love. Why not? It is a part of love. I have never understood until now how their obedience is necessary to bring order and happiness into life. Now I have seen it and I know what it means. Oh! women are not the equals of men. Let us cease to fight against the laws of Nature.'

'You strangely resemble your father, child. I have never seen the resemblance so strong. You talk like him, and you look like him.' This, had Madame known, was not an unlikely result of six weeks' daily intercourse.

'When I came back to this house,' Francesca went on, concealing nothing, 'I felt as if I were entering some Temple of a False God. I remembered the things I had seen here, heard here, said here. It is a Temple of a Religion which shuts out

humanity. The preachers are not real women; they must destroy their nature before they can preach and teach these things.'

'You are frank indeed.'

'I want you to understand exactly what I mean, mother. You wanted me to join in the advocacy of unreality. Why, so I might, because I knew nothing of the world. Men and women and all their ways—they were puppets—and I was to preach to puppets doctrines of which I understood not one word. But it is all changed. Mother, I am glad that you are leaving this great house, which is full of horrid memories and unreal thoughts. I could never come back to it. The place weighs upon me.'

'Again, Francesca, you are frank even to cruelty.'

'Forgive me, mother. I would not pain you, yet I must needs speak the truth. About submission and obedience, again, I will show you how much I am changed. There are two men—two—to obey either of whom—both of

whom—would be a joy and a happiness unspeakable to me.'

Her mother heard without asking who they were.

'One of them is a man to whom I would be a daughter—a wise and good man, the man who wanders about the world and meditates; the other is the man whom at your order I sent away. But now I know—I know very well—what the happiness of my life might be.'

'Child! Say no more. It is enough. All my lessons have been thrown away. I have lost my daughter as well as my fortune. Perhaps it would have been kinder to have concealed from me the former loss till I had partly resigned myself to the latter——'

'No, mother! No! You have not lost me! Throw away—with the horrid money—the hopeless Cause!'

Her mother sighed.

'You do not understand,' she said. 'It is my life. You give up me when you give up the Cause. Oh! I have brought you up to be my successor. Everything you learned,

every book you read, Francesca, was chosen by me with that object. I kept you apart from other girls. I allowed you no playfellows or friends, so that you should imbibe no other ideas than those I wished. You were nearly eighteen before I consented that you should go among other girls, and you were by that time strong in the opinions that I had cultivated—so strong that I was not afraid of you. Yet, after you have passed the ordeal of Newnham and its conflicting thoughts, when you are already arrived at one-and-twenty—an age when you should be confirmed in opinion—you suddenly abandon all the things you once held holy, and worship the things that you once derided. Francesca, what did I say when we spoke last about these things? Have I not a right to be disappointed?'

'Yes—mother—you have. Yet—at the same time—have I not a right to freedom of thought? It is not a sudden change. It began when I sent away Harold, and afterwards considered and tried to understand what love meant—and I found that in spite of my

fine words nothing would have made me so happy as submission—complete submission, mother, to his will. As soon as I found out that, what was left of the Cause? It was blown to the winds. Now, mother, let us talk about other things. What will you do?'

'I shall carry on the work of my life,' Madame Elveda replied coldly, 'as long as my life lasts. But we can no longer talk about that. Let us consider your future. I do not know what you really contemplate. In the flat that I shall take there will be a room for you, Francesca, if you choose to occupy it. Perhaps you will prefer the Common Lot with your new friends. If these Jews—our own People—do not want money, a very remarkable change must have come over our People. Perhaps, in time, you will discover that the Common Lot is not quite so enviable as the Lot that is less common, of wealth and culture, and manners and self-respect. Until then we will talk no more about it. Until then our lives, which have hitherto flowed on together, will run apart. Good-bye, Francesca.' She

gave her daughter the coldest of kisses, and turned to the study table and her papers. She sat a long time thinking.

Presently she took some note-paper and wrote a letter. It was as follows :—

'Dear Harold,—You will be sorry—unless you, too, have acquired the new ideas which now possess Francesca—to learn that I have been robbed of nearly the whole of my fortune. Enough remains for me to live upon with a certain amount of ease. Francesca, therefore, so far from being a great heiress, will inherit from me a very moderate sum of money. When you came to me two months ago I told you that the answer was in Francesca's hands. That was strictly true. I had already so influenced her that I knew beforehand what the answer would be.

'I did not ask, at that time, how far she had consulted her heart. It was enough for me that my daughter remained free to help me in my work.

'She will never help me in that work. She has deserted the Cause; she has ac-

quired, I know not how, opinions directly opposite to mine.

'There is a new Francesca. Should you feel impelled to put that same question once more to the new Francesca, you would, perhaps—I know not—receive another answer.

'I had always hoped that Francesca would prove superior to the weakness of her sex, and never marry. But since that hope seems likely to be shattered, there is no man to whom I would more gladly give her—whether in riches or in poverty—than to you. I must explain to you that twenty years ago, when I separated from my own people, I resolved that my child should never, if I could help it, know even that she was descended from the Jewish race. Therefore, I told her that we were Spanish Moors. This deception was meant to be harmless; it may have proved mischievous if Francesca were suspected of being cognisant of the deception or the truth.

'Your affectionate friend,

'Isabel Elveda.'

She folded the letter and put it in an envelope.

Then she fell to thinking again. Her daughter gone; her fortune gone; the friends of prosperity gone.

'Lonely—Friendless—Loveless!'

At five Melkah, according to her wont, brought her a cup of tea.

'Did you see her, Melkah? Did you talk to her?'

'She is changed. I said she would be changed. I saw the change in her face and in her eyes. It is in her voice. She has shaken off her fancies; she is another girl.'

'Yes. And now I believe it would be better for her to marry. It is not every woman who can develop her higher nature without love. Afterwards she will see things as they are.'

Melkah shook her head. 'The child should be called Eve. She is ready for love and obedience. She thinks no more about your Cause. She is a woman who has joined the women. She is ready to obey like all the rest. She is one of us; I see it in her face.

She has found out, somehow, for herself, the Law of God.

Madame Elveda turned her face as if to reply. It was a hollow, haggard face. Melkah sank down upon the hearthrug, and crouched in silence. She did this every afternoon, waiting for speech of her mistress, and for the teacup. This afternoon there was nothing said. Melkah fell asleep, as old people will. When she woke up, two hours later, her mistress still sat gazing into space, hollow-eyed and pale. The tea stood untouched. Melkah sat up, awake in a moment, to a sense of disaster.

'What is the trouble?' she asked.

'Melkah, you have been with me since I was a baby. For forty-two years you have never left me. Will you leave me now?'

'Why should I leave you? I am an old woman; my brothers are dead; you will close my eyes and bury me with my People. Why do you talk of leaving you?'

'I have lost my money, Melkah. There is enough left to keep you and me. But I

am now a poor woman, who once was so rich —so very, very rich that all the world envied me. I was so very rich that I could afford to throw away love and the man I loved, and to neglect the money that made me rich—so that is gone, and—and my daughter who was left me has gone too. Now there is nothing left but you, Melkah. What did Emanuel say? "Lonely—Friendless—Loveless." Only you left to me out of all my vast possessions, Melkah.'

'Nay, the child has only left you for a time; she will return.'

'Perhaps—I am weaker to-day than I have ever been before in all my life—perhaps, Melkah, Francesca is right. Better the Common Lot—to suffer with the rest, rather than to stand apart and fight against the Common Lot. Yet—No—No—No!' She sprang to her feet, and stood with clenched hands and hard eyes. 'No! If I had to do it all over again I would act in exactly the same manner. I will obey no man—not even Emanuel, my lover!'

CHAPTER XXXVII

YOUR OWN CHILD

They were gathered together once more—they thought it would be for the last time—in the little garden behind the little house, with the crowded Field of the Dead on one side and the crowded Street of the Living on the other. Francesca sat on the garden bench, her hands clasped, her head hanging in the deepest dejection. She had been pleading with Emanuel to remain, but vainly. Harold and Mr. Hayling—Lord Hayling—Anthony—stood or leaned against the wall; Emanuel walked up and down the short garden path or stopped to speak. It was the hour which most he loved—the twilight after sunset, when in the soft shades the burial-ground stretched out and became a vast plain and

the houses seemed to recede. But this evening he was agitated. His face, always serious, was full of trouble. When he spoke it was in a quick, nervous way, unlike his usual utterance. The philosopher had lost his calm. Yet, because it was their last night together, and on the morrow he would depart, he essayed to speak as one who may never more return. Francesca continued to plead with him. 'You will not go yet, Emanuel?' she said. 'Oh! not yet. You will give us one more month—one more week, even? We have so much to learn from you. Think! You have placed me on the threshold, and then you go away and leave me helpless!'

'You are on the threshold,' Emanuel repeated. 'Why, child, is not that enough? How many are there who even reach the threshold? Once there, if you are resolute and patient, the doors of the Temple will open to you, and you will penetrate as far as the Holy of Holies—wherein is the Presence,' he added solemnly, 'upon which none can look

and live. Yet if he dies, he then begins to live. What more can one do for a disciple than place him on the threshold ? But you are a woman ; you will need a leading hand. Well, you will have Harold always instead of me.'

Not another word had been spoken by either since Francesca owned her allegiance to the Law of her own People touching the submission of woman ; yet Emanuel assumed the conclusion of this love affair : and neither said him nay. Was this a time for maidenly pretence ?

'I want you—you—Emanuel. We all want you, not each other.'

'I must go. Man's life is a march—or is it a battlefield ?—where he sometimes finds a time of truce and rest. Then he sits down and looks about him. If he is fortunate, as I have been, he finds friends among the men and affection among the women. But, friends or no friends, he must not stay too long. Very soon he must get up and go on again, with the memory of his friends to console him, and the image in his heart of those with

whom he has talked. It is time, dear child, that I must get up and go away.'

'Why must you go, Emanuel?' asked Harold. 'Why not stay with us and wander no more? There are battles enough to fight here among all these people—your own, if you like—without going into the Desert.'

'The houses choke me. I cannot see the people for the houses in which they dwell. I cannot hear their voices for the noise of their work. In the silence of the Desert I can listen to the voice of man, and I can see the soul of man. But not here. I must go.'

Yet he was agitated, shaken: the drooping figure of the girl moved him, her entreaties shook him, he could not stand still, he could not even remain silent.

'I must go,' he repeated. 'My mind has been shaken. Past things have been revived. I have seen persons who I never thought to meet again: old emotions have been awakened, even old regrets. My child, I cannot even talk with you without being reminded continually of—another person.' He spoke with

an effort. 'I must endeavour somehow—by distance and forgetfulness—to regain my old tranquillity. I must not suffer new ties of friendship to bind me—even to you, my friends, my children. They will but embitter my closing days with regrets and longings. Let me go, and remember you only as one stage of the journey, just as one remembers the day when one was thirty years of age.'

'You will not forget us, Emanuel,' said Francesca. 'You cannot. But you can go out of the crowded streets, and we will follow and be with you. The new ties of friendship should bind you more strongly to the humanity of which you think continually. Emanuel,' she laid her hand upon his arm, 'be persuaded.'

'Nay, I must go. I have stayed too long already. It will take a long time to recover the lost tranquillity. I must go.' But he showed in his voice that he fain would stay.

'Be persuaded, Emanuel,' said Lord Hayling, or Anthony. 'Stay a little longer, if only to support and encourage a man who is

sometimes tempted to grumble though he has got all that he asked. Your voice the last two months has been a help and a stay. Things sometimes seem rather too much even for the Common Lot. When I say that the Countess has this day appeared before the Magistrates for being drunk and disorderly——'

'My friend, you want no help,' said Emanuel. 'You have got all you asked—and more.'

'Be persuaded, Emanuel,' said Harold. 'There is the great Discovery. Will you leave that upon my hands?'

'My Discovery!' said Emanuel, answering Harold. 'That is another reason for going away and staying away. My Discovery, of which I thought so much!' He laughed gently. 'I suppose there never was any man so joyful over any Discovery as I was, while I tramped across Russia with the thing in my head, and no means of putting it down on paper. I foresaw—you all know—I told you all—what I foresaw—the Dream of the Coming Heaven—the Golden Age—the Satur-

nian Reign, the event of the long-expected Prophecy, the age of Peace and Goodwill. By me—man was to abandon for ever the chief curse of humanity: by me—there were to be no more wars; not because men had learned for themselves and understood why war should be abolished, but because I—I myself—a humble Jew driven with blows and threats out of the Czar's realm—had discovered an instrument which rendered war impossible! Wonderful, was it not?—wonderful! Never any man more puffed up with pride than I was. I tried to speak humbly, but I was filled and blown out with pride. You remember my insolence and my pride, Harold.'

'I remember nothing of the kind,' said Harold.

'I thought that I would give you the Discovery. It should be yours to announce it, to prepare the way for it, and to present it to the world. What would it matter who discovered it? I knew that I should have the pride of it, all my life. So that was the

meaning—that, and nothing else, as I now perceive—of my false humility. I would go away again and remain unseen and unknown, rejoicing all my life to think that my invention was working its way, and that the world was changing. I had no doubt—no doubt at all—of what would happen.'

'And now, Emanuel?'

'Now I perceive that it was but another Dream. I have been a Dreamer all my life. Nothing in the world makes men more happy than dreams of things impossible.'

'Your invention,' said Harold, 'is no Dream: it is a reality—a reality more awful and more terrible than I can grasp. That is no dream, but the biggest thing that chemistry has ever yet achieved.'

'Yet a Dream. Oh! my friends, let me confess. I can never again lift my head for the shame that has fallen upon me.'

'Oh! my Master!'—Francesca sprang to her feet and caught his hand—'you to speak of shame! You, whose heart is full of love and wisdom! Ours is the shame to be so

far—so far below you. Shame! And for you?'

'Shame, child, because I was so short-sighted that I thought this thing, which I now perceive would fill the whole world with Devils, was the Gift of the Lord. And it was your doing, child—you first made me doubt. A woman sees quicker and farther than a man. But I was dreaming—I was dreaming.'

The girl bent over him and kissed his hand, while her tears fell upon it.

'Let me confess,' said Emanuel, 'let me confess. I am a Dreamer of Dreams. I dwell in the world which is not.' He looked across the Field of the Dead, his right hand shading his eyes as if he saw on the Plain of Death the world of his dreams. 'No man so happy as one who can see far beyond the present the future that shall be. We have been a nation of such Dreamers, because for two thousand years we could not bear to think upon the present. Yes'—his eyes were the veritable eyes of a Dreamer—'all my life I have dreamed of the Great Prophecy Unful-

filled—the greatest of all the Prophecies—the Reign of Peace and Love. All the obstacles—greed of gold, selfishness, lust for power, war, ignorance, shortness of life—all these things seemed to me capable of being removed and abolished, if men could be for once persuaded to endeavour after that time. I thought of the wise men of the world filling the brains and firing the hearts of all the rest with a burning desire to achieve this time—the rage of the Crusade would be a poor and feeble emotion compared with the ardent passion after Righteousness which would be roused among all mankind by the exhortations of these Prophets. I have had this vision always, I say ; I have ardently longed and prayed to do something, however small, to help that time. Then I came to understand that as man's spiritual strength rises out of his physical necessities and instincts, so that the soul grows with food as the body, and must be nourished with new food as the body : and as the highest love grows out of the lowest instinct, so the advance of man has been

always step by step with his advance in physical knowledge. For this reason, the change for good or evil during the last sixty years is unparalleled by any change in any previous thousand years of the world's history. Therefore I thought some great physical discovery might at any time be made which should give to the world one more decided step. I could not alleviate or prevent disease, or lengthen this our short span of life, or make men give up the foolish pursuit of riches. But I could—and did—invent a means whereby, I fondly thought, war should be rendered impossible for all future time. You know the rest, Harold. You remember how I announced to you, mysteriously, my Discovery. You remember how I revealed it—how, in this garden, after we had spoken of the continuity of the human race, which seemed to make it so much more precious. The continuity of life is, I know, not a new doctrine. I have not invented or discovered this truth. It has been taught by many learned Rabbis in many

forms. It is sufficient for me to know that what we do in this present life we do for ourselves in the ages to come. Therefore my Discovery, as I believed, would be not for what we call posterity, but for ourselves—ourselves—ourselves. You remember how we talked——'

'As if we could ever forget!' Francesca murmured.

'Then you, child, brought your doubts. See how a woman may bring to shame the man who thinketh himself wise. You spoke as a woman—inasmuch as you considered the effect it would have upon Man. Where would be his courage? you asked. For a man's courage, you said, wiser than I, means his invention, his enterprise, his success, his desire of excellence. Man without the fighting instinct, you said, being wiser in your instinct than I with my knowledge, would become like a woman: content to sit down and accept what is brought; or he would become like one of a horde of monkeys preying upon each other. That is what you said, Francesca.'

'Yes, Emanuel, that is what I dared to say.'

'I was too full of my own belief to pay much heed at first. But afterwards—afterwards—yes, I began to have doubts. Then you, Anthony, spoke in your turn. You said that my Discovery would do none of the things that I hoped for it. You said that it would either make War more terrible, or would lead to a more intolerable tyranny than any the world has ever seen. You said also that it would destroy all that is left of the Common Life—with Common action, discipline, and obedience—so that the rich would become ever richer and more tyrannical, and the poor feebler and more wretched; that is what you said, Anthony.'

'That is pretty well the substance of what I said. I have thought more about it, and I think so still, but more strongly. We want the restoration of the Common, not the Individual Life. In Communities we may work out our salvation. We are just returning to the idea of the Community; and your

unfortunate Invention, Emanuel, would arrive like a gift of Setebos the Troubler to make the Community impossible.'

Emanuel turned to Harold. 'You have not spoken, my friend. Well, I am going away. I leave this Thing in your hands. I give it to you, Harold.'

'You can no more give such a thing to me, Emanuel, than you can give me the wit and wisdom of your brain. No more than you can give me your eyes and the look that lies in them. It is yours—your very own—your child, whether a Devil or an Angel.'

'Tell me, then, what you think. Speak. This child of mine—is it Devil or Angel?'

'Frankly, Devil. It will prove the worst Devil ever let loose upon an unfortunate world. I have been thinking of nothing else, I believe, since you revealed the thing. You thought that because you would make war inconceivably more terrible than ever you would make men more inclined for righteousness. That can only be the effect if men were ready for righteousness, which is, I take it,

unselfishness. You judge the world by yourself, Emanuel. Because you ardently desire this Return of the Golden Age, you think that all men desire that happy time. I assure you that what most of us want is not the Golden Age at all, but as much as they can devour and more. And into this world you introduce a weapon which will give to everyone—old and young, rich and poor, strong and weak, the power of unlimited destruction. Any man may destroy what he pleases, and as much as he pleases, to gratify his own greed or his rage or his malice. What a world—what a world it will be when this Devil is loose among us! Why, he will break up everything—Society, community, cities, industries, arts, science—everything. Men will drift apart—we shall resolve into the original elements, we shall live apart, suspicious, waiting every day to be killed by an invisible foe—ready to go forth and slay all around us for very safety!'

Emanuel groaned. 'This is what I myself have learned. You are all right. And I, who thought myself so wise, am proved a Fool.

This is the end of that great Dream. Well, Harold, it is yours. I give it to you. What will you do with it?'

'By your orders, what you choose. Without your orders, nothing; I will not take upon myself the awful responsibility of giving to the world this weapon of universal destruction. Nor will I place in the hands of even our own Government an instrument which could be turned to such purposes as this, not even for the sake—if the question should arise—of the national safety.'

'A physical discovery,' said Emanuel, 'may be preparatory. Most great things have been arrived at by tentatives. If men are not ready for them, they are kept back. Many things were known concerning the powers of steam before it was made the slave of man; and of electricity before it was caught and trained and forced to work for man. For, you see, it was not until this century that men were prepared and ready for steam and electricity. And then these forces were tamed and pressed into our ser-

vice. When the story of man comes to be written, it will be understood how certain qualities grew slowly in his brain while he was doing over and over again, from generation to generation, the same things in the same way, just as a boy writing exercises over and over again, and at last makes grammar a part of his brain. But that boy does not begin to write until the grammar is a part of his brain—so with man: he prepares—sometimes for thousands of years—for the next great step. When it comes, he is ready. My friends, I admit, sorrowfully, that the world is not yet ready for the abolition of war. And I confess with shame that my invention will not abolish war. We must not abandon war until we have learned to practise, without the aid of war, all the things which render war valuable—courage—enterprise—discipline, desire to excel—and have transferred them to the Life in Common. When all lives are spent in working for the good of all, we shall be like the Monks who worked together in their Cloisters, all for the Brother-

hood, not for wages, and gave their best to the Community, because they had no self to take it. The Brotherhood—yes. We shall form one great Brotherhood. That will be the greatest and the last of social schemes and experiments. Like all great things it was discovered by our People—it came out of the Law and the Prophets—and the Christians in their monasteries only imitated the Essenes who were Jews.' He sighed heavily. 'Alas! we are as yet far off. When this truth is accepted, my friends, war will cease naturally. Then, if my invention is discovered anew, it will only make that physically impossible which has already become morally impossible. Of all the evils of which we complain, war will be the last to vanish. The Prophet, I now perceive, spoke not of the sudden conversion of the universal human heart, but of the gradual change. Let us work our utmost for that gradual change for ourselves—ourselves.'

'And—again—your Discovery, Emanuel?'

'The Discovery—I leave it in your hands,

Harold. Destroy it—publish it—as you will. It is not mine, I repeat. Let me never hear any more about it.'

'I must not destroy a scientific truth,' replied the chemist. 'I will preserve it. I will lock it up for the whole of my life, and I will leave it at my death, as a secret gift, to the President of the Royal Society. Will that be a reasonable compromise, Emanuel?'

'As you will. I leave it in your hands. It is sufficient for me to understand and to confess that it is not what I hoped and believed. Not unto me is it given to change the course of this mighty river.'

It was at this point, just where this history ends, that the other discovery—that for which Francesca had been sent to the house—was made. In a most undramatic fashion, after all: for the two most concerned in it did not understand it, and it had to be explained, after all. In order to account for the apparent stupidity of these two intelligent persons, remember that one had no suspicion or knowledge that he had a daughter at all,

and that the other had been brought up in the belief that her father was dead. As for this discovery, the simplest accident in the world revealed it. So far, it was just as Clara had expected.

Harold it was who brought about this accident as follows.

'Very well,' he said, 'I will add within the packet a note stating that this paper was placed in my hands on the twentieth day of the month of June, 1893, by its discoverer, Emanuel—Emanuel—now I come to think of it—the very first time that I have thought of it. . . . I have never heard your surname, Emanuel.'

'Have you not? It matters nothing. Among my friends I have but one name—Emanuel. When I was young and belonged to Western Europe, they called me Emanuel Elveda.'

'Elveda?' Francesca looked up astonished. 'My own name?'

'Emanuel Elveda?' Harold repeated. Then the whole truth suddenly flashed upon

him. He knew the story of the separation—the family story. He knew that the husband had been a man of science, a chemist of great promise, whose papers were in old Transactions; and that he had left his wife and gone away—perished in Morocco, it was thought. And he knew the miniature — Francesca's portrait of her father—and now he recognised the likeness, and, with the certainty that is surer than logic, and falls upon the mind with greater swiftness than follows the narration of facts, he knew the man before him. 'Emanuel Elveda? You are Emanuel Elveda, come back again? Why, we thought you dead—dead—dead long ago. Francesca, this is Emanuel Elveda—Emanuel Elveda——'

'Yes, I am Emanuel Elveda. Why not? Why are you astonished?'

'Oh! He asks why I am astonished!'

Francesca looked up quietly.

'What is the matter? Is your name really Emanuel Elveda? Why, that is my name too. My father was Elveda. We must be cousins.'

'Cousins!' Harold repeated, scornfully and impatiently. 'Has no one got eyes but myself? Good Heavens! Emanuel—tell me, please—you once had a wife?'

'Certainly, I had once a wife.'

'What was her name?'

'Her name was Isabel—Isabel Albu.'

'Francesca! now do you understand? His wife's name was Isabel. This man—this wise man—this man we all love—why—he is your father—your own father—your father—Francesca.'

Francesca looked astonished, but was, so far, unmoved.

'You are quite wrong, Harold,' she said coldly. 'My father is dead long ago. He died on a scientific expedition in Morocco.'

'You are quite wrong, Harold,' said Emanuel. 'There are other Elvedas in the world, and other Albus. As for me, I have no daughter.'

'Are there, then, two Emanuel Elvedas? Two chemists of that name? Two men of that name who separated from their wives?

Two Isabels of that name who parted from their husbands? Are there two men with the same face? Francesca, you are blind—blind. Here is the very face of your miniature—twenty years older. I see—there is no doubt—now why I always thought I knew your face, Emanuel. Francesca,' for the girl began to doubt and to tremble, 'this is your father, I tell you. He is not dead. It must be.'

'My father is dead.' She was now trembling, and her face was white. 'He died long, long ago, in Morocco. But oh! I wish——'

'I have no child,' said Emanuel. 'I left my wife long ago. But—if it had been otherwise—I wish——'

'Tell me again, man!' cried Harold, impatiently, 'are there two men of your name and your story? Are there—can there be—two women of that same name and that same story?'

'But—I have no child.'

'My father left my mother a month after their marriage,' Francesca explained. 'He

saw her a year later when I was an infant. He was not told that I existed. He went away, and my mother heard afterwards that he was dead—it was said that he had died on a scientific expedition. I do not understand. I have always been told that my father was dead,' she added helplessly.

'Who is your mother, Francesca?' Harold persisted. 'Tell us that. Where does she live?'

'She is Isabel Elveda, who has written on the Condition of Women, and she now lives in the Cromwell Road.'

'In the Cromwell Road?' Emanuel asked. 'Why, I have seen her. She is my wife! Francesca! Francesca!' he spread out his trembling hands as a blind man feels his way. 'Francesca! Is this possible? Can I—even I, too—have a child?—and you—you? You are Isabel's child—and mine? I saw her a few days ago. Yet she told me nothing. My wife lives in the Cromwell Road. Your mother lives— What does this mean? I have no daughter. I cannot have a daughter.

What does all this mean? Harold, you began it. Tell me what it means. I am growing childish. How can Francesca be my daughter?'

He looked around in helpless agitation and confusion.

At that moment a white figure appeared at the garden door, and ran swiftly down the garden path. It was Clara, coming to clear up all before Emanuel vanished again into the country where there is no post and where nobody has an address.

'Clara!' cried Francesca, 'tell me, if you can—tell me, for Heaven's sake, what this means.'

'We have just discovered,' said Harold, briefly, 'that Emanuel's name is Elveda.'

'Oh! They have just found it out? I came here this evening on purpose to tell them. I have known it all along. Francesca, forgive me. I thought that if I brought you two together you would find out before very long the secret of your relationship, and I knew that whether the delay was long or short

you would learn to love each other. But, to be sure, I thought it would be discovered in a day or two, or even in an hour or two. If you had been ordinary folk you would have found it out long ago. But your heads were up in the clouds—you never stooped to ask the simplest questions as to who and what you were—at home—as they say at school. Your heads were in the air: you were always talking of things too deep for ordinary mortals. So you have only just found it out?'

'I don't understand yet,' said Francesca.

'One moment. Tell me, dear, are you grateful to me for bringing you to know Emanuel?'

'Yes—yes, of course I am.'

'Do you already respect and revere him? Do you sit at his feet and hear him?'

'He has been my Master. I have no words for the respect and veneration in which I hold him.'

'Add love, then, to your veneration, for he is your father. Emanuel, are you willing to have a daughter?'

'I have never thought it possible that I should have a daughter.'

'Yet you have one. That evening when you bade farewell to your wife this child was an infant three months old lying in a cradle. But you were not told. If you have any doubt, ask Melkah—the old Syrian woman—you remember Melkah? Look at this girl, and ask your own heart. Can you love this girl? Look at her face—is it not your own?'

Then Emanuel looked upon his daughter's face, and knew that she was his own child. And he lifted his hands solemnly to bless his daughter. But he spoke no word. And without a word Francesca fell into her father's embrace.

Clara touched Harold's hand, and they left the father and daughter together. 'I was afraid,' she said in the parlour, 'that I should be too late. I only understood this evening that his departure was so near. Oh! if he had disappeared again without learning the truth! I should never have dared to tell

Francesca. We knew it all along, because he came to father with a letter from a foreign correspondent. I don't know whether it was wisest to act as we did—I wanted Francesca to be influenced by him. I found out before she came here what a wonderful creature he is—I knew he would touch her imagination. We will go away and leave them for the night. They will have so much to say.'

'You knew all along?'

'Yes. Oh! there is more. Madame Elveda is my cousin—that my father knew, but I did not. Our name is Albu, and her name was Albu. And now she has lost nearly all her money, poor lady! and she has lost her daughter, for Francesca will never take up Woman's Cause now, never—never—never. She will love her father too much. Mr. Alleyne, I'm sorry you've lost your peerage, but it is a wonderful thing for Nelly, isn't it? You will have for wife, after all, a Daughter of the Law obedient to the will of her husband. That is, of course, if Francesca——'

Harold smiled. Christians, before the

wedding bells ring, are only half-hearted about wishing the obedience of their wives.

'Provided,' he said, 'that she accepts in exchange'—to an Oriental like Clara the words were mere foolishness—'the service and the obedience of her lover.'

A week later the same group were gathered together again in that little room. Francesca was in travelling costume, and her boxes were in the narrow passage outside. Emanuel's travelling costume remained the same as he had always worn, and his luggage consisted of a bag in which were his carving tools and a few necessaries.

'Everything is ready, Francesca?' asked Harold. 'Can I do nothing for you?'

'Nothing more, Harold, thank you. We are going right through to Beirût—from there I will write to you—and to Damascus next. There I will write again. After that we are going to join some Arab tribe and live awhile in the Desert.'

'Have you seen your mother?'

'Yes, she is hard and bitter. She cannot forgive me, though she tried to say kind things. I have deserted her—and the Cause—oh! the Cause!' She shuddered. 'She has lost her friends with her fortune. Except for Melkah, she is alone. Go and see her often, Harold. She will be very lonely.'

'And you—you are happy, Francesca?'

'I am happier than I have ever been in all my life before. There is nothing in the world to live for but the life of nature and God's law. I have my father to study and to obey. It is such happiness as I never imagined. And all the world has grown so real—and I am in it, not outside it. The Passing Show has become part of the Eternal Drama in which I, too, play my humble part. I have my father and my cousins. I am no longer without kith and kin.'

'Will you not acknowledge your lover as well?' he whispered.

'Yes—I have—you. What more can I want, or look to have? Let me, like Anthony, have the Common Lot! What better can

there be than the Lot intended by the Lord for all?'

Harold started. Who had ever before heard from Francesca's lips a single word in the spirit of Faith?

'The Common Lot,' said the Earl, who was with them. 'I chose it and would not give it up, though the Countess has again been fined twenty shillings and costs—for the usual offence. The Common Lot is best.'

'We leave you.' Emanuel looked about him. 'I take my daughter—my Francesca'—his voice dropped like that of a lover when he names his mistress, and his eyes grew humid as he gazed upon her—'I take my daughter—my Francesca—to the Land of our Fathers. She shall see the ruins where her ancestor the Prince of the Captivity ruled for a thousand years, and she shall see the cities and mountains where another ancestor, a greater Prince, reigned for his allotted time and wrote his Psalms for all time. Then we will stay awhile—my Francesca with me—in the Desert. After a time she—my Francesca

—will return to you; but as for me, I will return no more to the vast collections of bricks called the towns of Europe. I have been presumptuous. I thought it was given to me alone among men suddenly to change the mind of the world and to make them ready for the Reign of Peace. I must win my way back to humility by meditation and by silence. You shall have my daughter—my Francesca—back; but for me, I shall return no more.'

'Francesca!' Harold took her hand. 'Francesca, my Rose of Sharon!'

'Patience, Harold. Oh! dear friend'—she laid her other hand on Emanuel's shoulder—'suffer me to be with my father—my own father—a little longer. Oh! you cannot tell what a happiness it is to hear his voice, only to serve him and to obey him! A little longer, Harold! Then, if it please my Lord, and if his handmaiden still finds favour in his eyes——'

THE END

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